TUDOR QUEENS OF BLING
HOW HENRY'S SIX WIVES BECAME STYLE ICONS

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TUTANKHAMUN'S REIGN OF TERROR

The brutal realities of life in Egypt's golden age

PLUS

Who *really* discovered the boy king's tomb?

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How Mussolini propelled the far right to power in 1922

Marie Antoinette's battle for survival

The ever-changing Elizabethans
How Britain was transformed during the Queen's reign

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WELCOME DECEMBER 2022

BBC HiSTORY MAGAZINE

"One hundred years ago this month, Howard Carter first peered into the tomb of **Tutankhamun** and saw the "wonderful things" that would inspire a century of fascination with Egypt's golden age. But while there's no doubting the magnificence of the tomb's treasures, the boy king's reign would have seemed far less glittering to those living at the other end of the social spectrum. In this month's cover feature (from page 56), Guy de la Bédoyère explores the brutal reality of **Egypt's 18th Dynasty**.

We're also reflecting on royalty of a very different kind as our contributors assess the reign and passing of **Queen Elizabeth II**. On page 38, Anna Whitelock examines the dramatic changes that shook Britain and its empire during the Queen's 70 years on the throne. Meanwhile, both Michael Wood (page 18) and Tracy Borman (page 15) share their thoughts on her historic funeral.

Michael and Tracy's pieces form part of our new-look **Conversation** section, in which we provide historical context to the world of today. I hope you enjoy it – please write in with your thoughts – and don't forget to continue the conversations at our website, which is now entirely free to access for magazine subscribers, via ***historyextra.com/freeaccess*** or the QR code (left). If you're not yet a subscriber, then do head to page 64 for our latest offer, where you can select one of this year's must-read history books.

Rob Attar
Editor

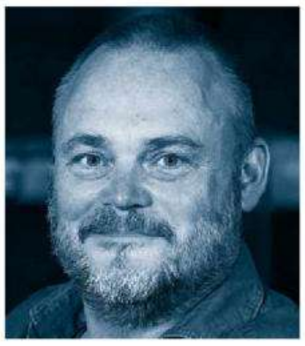
THREE THINGS I'VE LEARNED THIS MONTH

1. Planting a seed
I was intrigued to read about the methods used by ancient Egyptian women to detect pregnancies. One involved urinating on bundles of emmer wheat and barley, where germination indicated a baby was on its way (page 66).

2. Secret war
David Hendy's piece on the BBC in the Second World War contains the fascinating detail that the presenter who announced the D-Day landings had to spend that morning in a locked room guarded by military police, to ensure total secrecy (page 46).

3. A lost saint
Until reading this month's *Explore* piece on Bury St Edmunds, I hadn't realised that the body of the titular saint had vanished centuries ago. His whereabouts remain a mystery today (page 94).

THIS ISSUE'S CONTRIBUTORS



Al Murray
"One striking aspect of the Second World War is that the Allies got off to a terrible start before completely turning it around. The question is, of course, how?"
Al discusses the Allied commanders who helped turn the tide of the Second World War on page 76

Nicola Tallis
"By exploring the jewels that they wore in their roles as Henry VIII's consorts, my research shows the famous six wives in a different – and fascinating – light."
Nicola explores how Henry's queens used their jewels to project power on page 31

RJB Bosworth
"Given that 28 October 2022 marks the centenary of Fascist 'revolution', there is all the more reason to think hard about what Mussolini actually did in 20 years of the 'Italian dictatorship'."
RJB Bosworth chronicles the Fascists' rise to power on page 22

Catriona Seth
"I am fascinated by the fact that Marie-Antoinette's image is incredibly well-known, but that fallacious rumours about her still abound. One of the ways of getting closer to the real woman is by reading her letters."
Catriona uncovers the French queen's story through her own words on page 68

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ON THE COVER: GOLDEN FUNERAL MASK OF THE PHARAOH TUTANKHAMUN: GETTY IMAGES; KATHERINE PARR, ANNE BOLEYN: GETTY IMAGES; JANE SEYMOUR: ALAMY. QUEEN ELIZABETH II, 1953: GETTY IMAGES. UNION JACK: DREAMSTIME.COM THIS PAGE: BBC/DREAMSTIME.COM/BRIDGEMAN/JENI NOTT/DAMIEN MACFADDEN

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In the 12th part of our series on the BBC's history, **David Hendy** explains why the D-Day landings of June 1944 marked a turning point in on-the-ground war reporting by radio

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Howard Carter is famed for opening the resting place of the boy king – but, as **Toby Wilkinson** reveals, he didn't make this discovery on his own

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Guy de la Bédoyère introduces the rulers of ancient Egypt's golden age, who created magnificent monuments – but whose realm was blighted by brutality, corruption and inequality

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Catriona Seth explores the letters and secret messages penned by the French queen as the revolution raged

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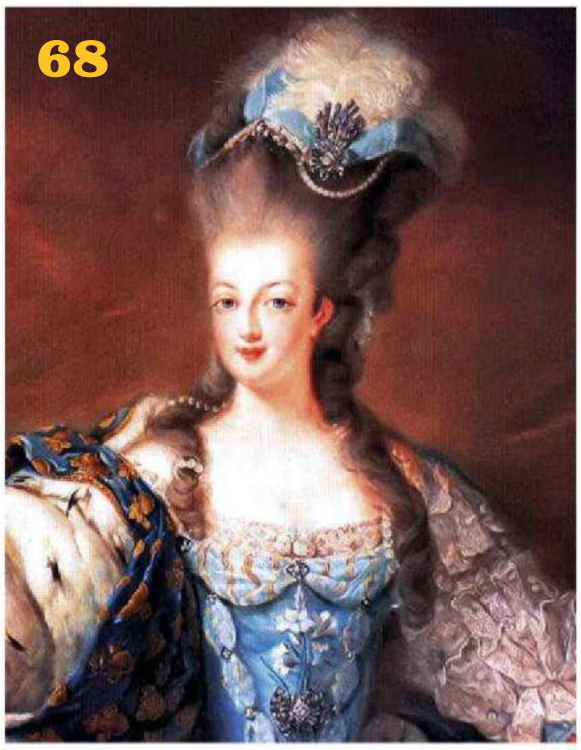

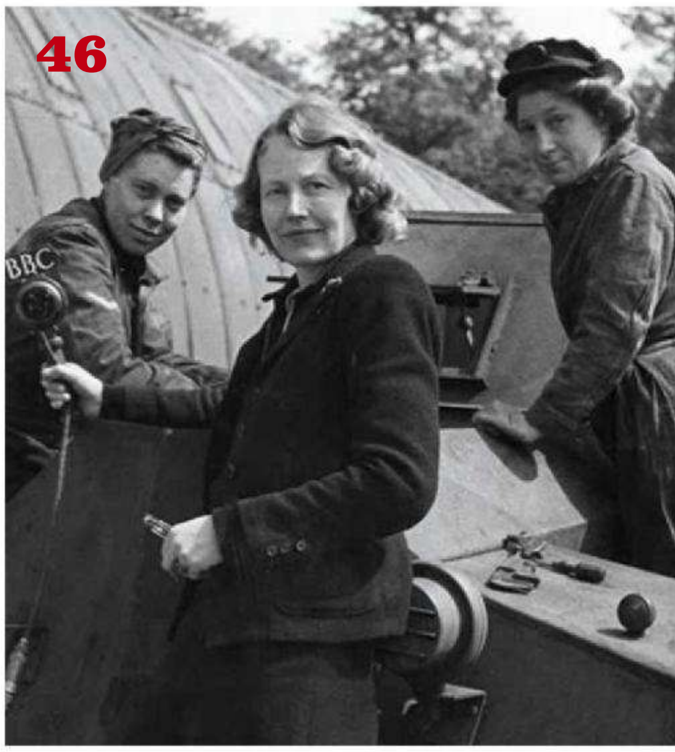

GETTY IMAGES/BBC/JENNIFER LAMB - THE ENCHANTED TUDOR ROSE

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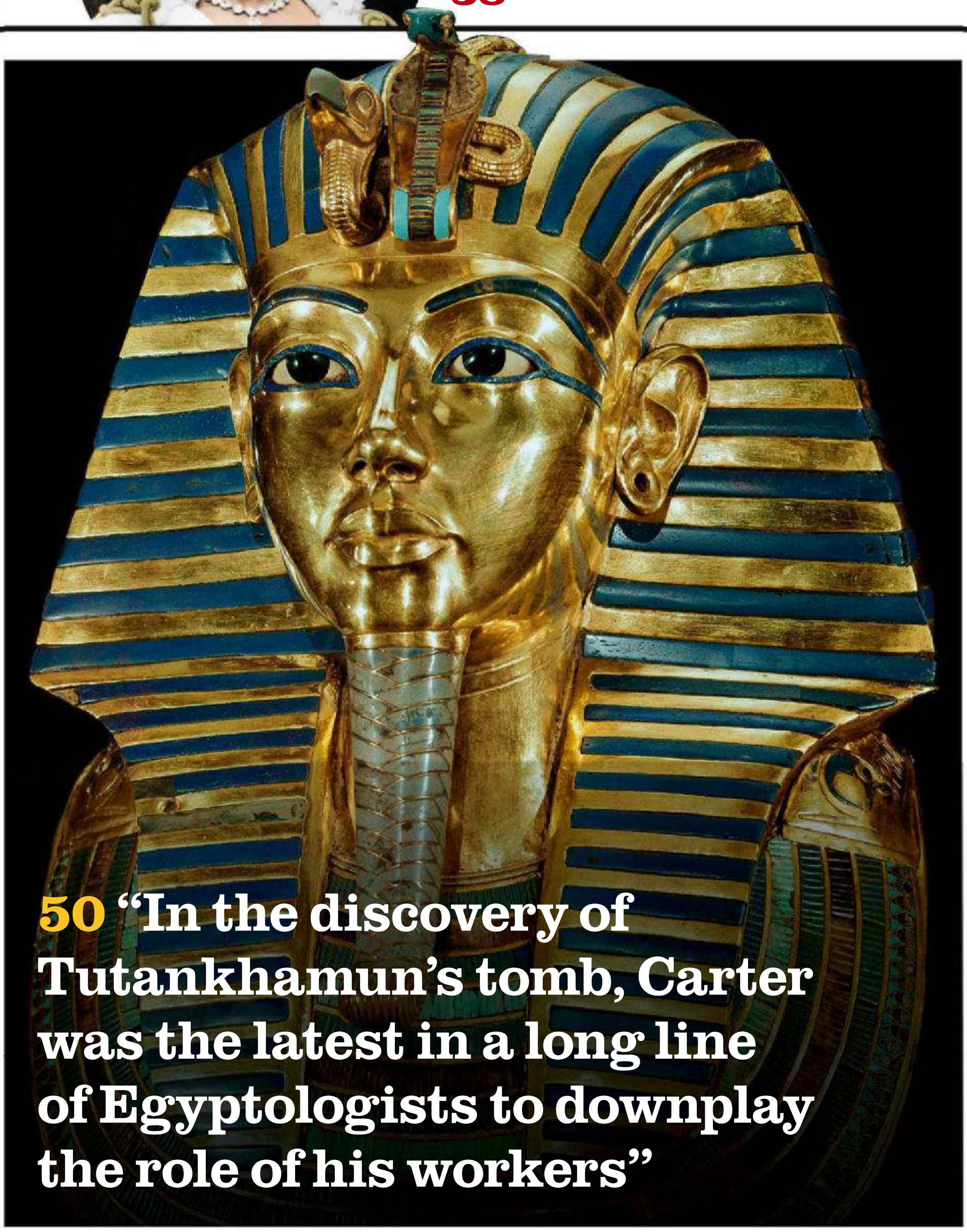

50 "In the discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb, Carter was the latest in a long line of Egyptologists to downplay the role of his workers"

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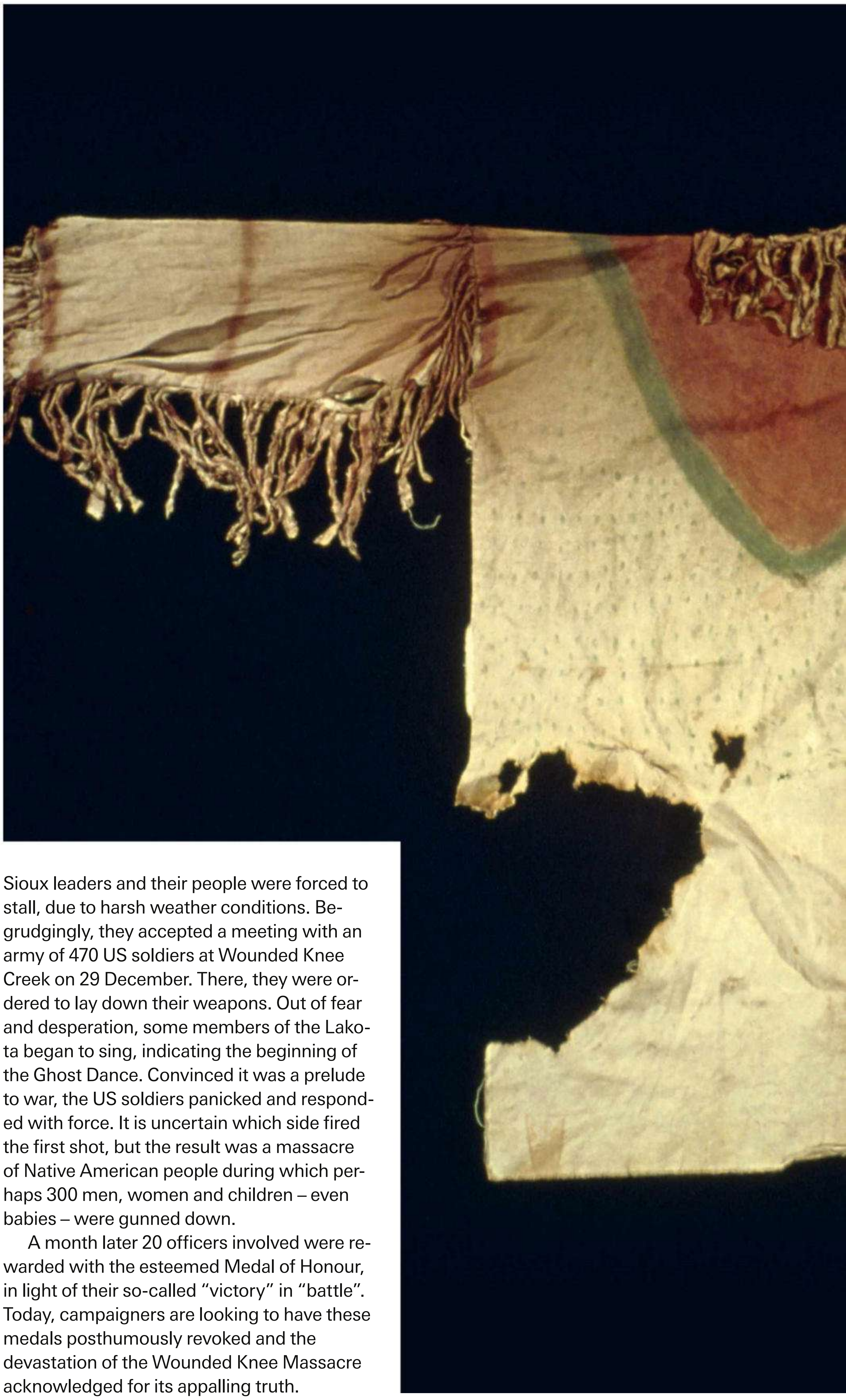
ANNIVERSARIES

HELEN CARR highlights events that took place in December in history



This "Ghost Shirt" belonged to one of the Native American people killed at the Wounded Knee Massacre. Such a sacred garment would be worn while practising the religious ritual of the Ghost Dance

29 DECEMBER 1890

Hundreds massacred at Wounded Knee

Native Americans are brutally gunned down by US soldiers

By nightfall on 29 December, blood stained the winter snow shrouding the frozen bodies of men, women and children of the Lakota people. They had earlier gathered to peacefully perform the "Ghost Dance". The Sioux people (to which the Lakota belong) believed this ritual would invoke the destruction of the punitive world in which they were prisoner to the colonising white people, and recreate the world anew.

The Ghost Dance was not a new phenomenon. Threatened by its meaning, the US army had banned Native American people from conducting it throughout reservations across the country. As part of the crackdown, in December 1890 a force of around 40 US soldiers advanced on a Lakota tribe whose leader was Sitting Bull, the famous opponent of Lieutenant Colonel Custer at the bloody battle of the Little Bighorn in 1876. Though by now effectively under house arrest at Standing Rock Agency in South Dakota, Sitting Bull had allowed dancers to gather at his camp there, and the army had been informed. Hasty preparations were made to arrest him.

On 15 December 1890, the US army attempted to take Sitting Bull into custody, but they were met with resistance. A skirmish broke out, and the legendary chief was mortally shot. Members of his band fled into the night to join Sitting Bull's half brother, Spotted Elk. After two weeks of seeking aid and trying to evade the army, Spotted Elk and other Sioux leaders and their people were forced to stall, due to harsh weather conditions. Begrudgingly, they accepted a meeting with an army of 470 US soldiers at Wounded Knee Creek on 29 December. There, they were ordered to lay down their weapons. Out of fear and desperation, some members of the Lakota began to sing, indicating the beginning of the Ghost Dance. Convinced it was a prelude to war, the US soldiers panicked and responded with force. It is uncertain which side fired the first shot, but the result was a massacre of Native American people during which perhaps 300 men, women and children – even babies – were gunned down.

A month later 20 officers involved were rewarded with the esteemed Medal of Honour, in light of their so-called "victory" in "battle". Today, campaigners are looking to have these medals posthumously revoked and the devastation of the Wounded Knee Massacre acknowledged for its appalling truth.

Pollution shrouds Piccadilly Circus in gloom during the Great Smog, which led to thousands of deaths

4 DECEMBER 1952

London is suffocated by the "Great Smog" as polluted air stagnates over the city. Visibility is reduced to only a few metres.

BRIDGEMAN/GETTY IMAGES

12 DECEMBER 1474

Isabella instigates a coup and installs herself as queen

The audacious 23-year-old seizes control of Castile

On the night of 11 December 1474, Henry IV of Castile lay in agony, likely suffering from a urinary tract blockage. In the early hours of the following morning he died, setting in train a constitutional coup with a 23-year-old woman at its helm.

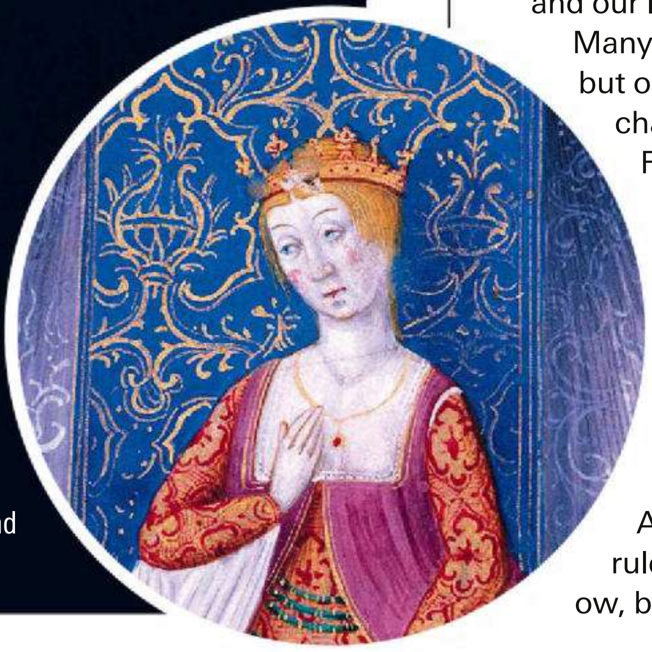
Henry's much younger half-sister, Isabella, was based at the Alcázar of Segovia. This impressive castle, home to royal archives and treasure, stood atop a rocky crag at the confluence of two rivers in the Guadarrama mountains of Castile. From there, she announced herself as queen of Castile.

Her brother, known as "Henry the Impotent", had been married twice but produced only one daughter, Joanna, who was rumoured to have been fathered by another man.

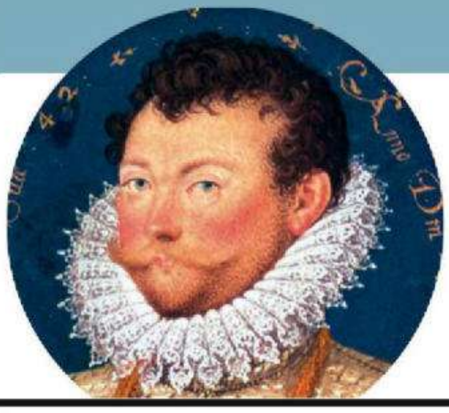
Rather than await judicial announcement for the accession to the throne, Isabella took matters into her own hands. Within hours of receiving news of the death, she initiated the coup and prepared for her proclamation as queen of Castile, rehearsing the ceremony with acute attention to detail and duty.

The following day, as the cold winter wind swept through the streets of Segovia, Isabella swore to seek the common good of the Castilian people. The cry rang out, led by royal heralds: "Castile, Castile, Castile, for the queen and our lady!"

Many were outraged by her brazen move, but opinions of the young queen soon changed. Alongside her husband, Ferdinand, as one of Europe's first queen regnants, Isabella proved herself strong, capable and loyal to her country. With Ferdinand at her side, she conquered Islamic Andalusia and began a family that would be placed into some of the major royal houses in Europe – most famously, her daughter Catherine of Aragon. Isabella was a queen who ruled alongside a man, not in his shadow, but in uncompromising equality.



Queen Isabella of Castile, shown here in a late 15th-century Spanish picture, proved herself a strong leader. Her daughter, Catherine of Aragon, became queen of England



A 1581 portrait of Sir Francis Drake, painted by Nicholas Hilliard

13 DECEMBER 1577

The renowned sailor **Francis Drake sets out from Plymouth** for an epic journey around the globe by sea. He will see battle, engage in piracy and claim a land that he will call Nova Albion.

2 DECEMBER 1697

The **new St Paul's Cathedral,** designed by Sir Christopher Wren, is officially opened following the destruction of the original cathedral during the Great Fire of London.

1 DECEMBER 1135

King Henry I dies after eating too many lampreys

England is thrown into a succession crisis and a destructive civil war

At 360 million years old, lampreys pre-date the dinosaurs. However it is not the origins of these small, eel-like, jawless fish that makes them famous, but their culpability in the death of the last Norman monarch of England.

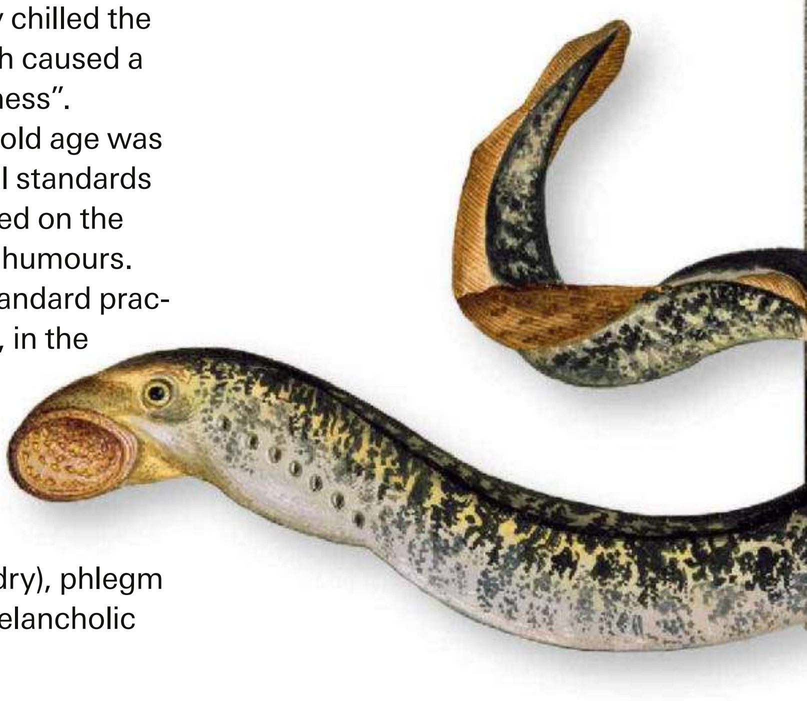
In late November 1135, King Henry I, the youngest son of William the Conqueror, was at Lyons-la-Forêt near Rouen in Normandy on a hunting trip with his court. But on 1 December, his 35-year-long reign was cut short by his unexpected and dramatic death. According to the contemporary chronicler Henry of Huntingdon, Henry I "had given peace to the realm, and was the father of his people". Huntingdon attributed the king's untimely demise to his last meal, "a surfeit of lampreys".

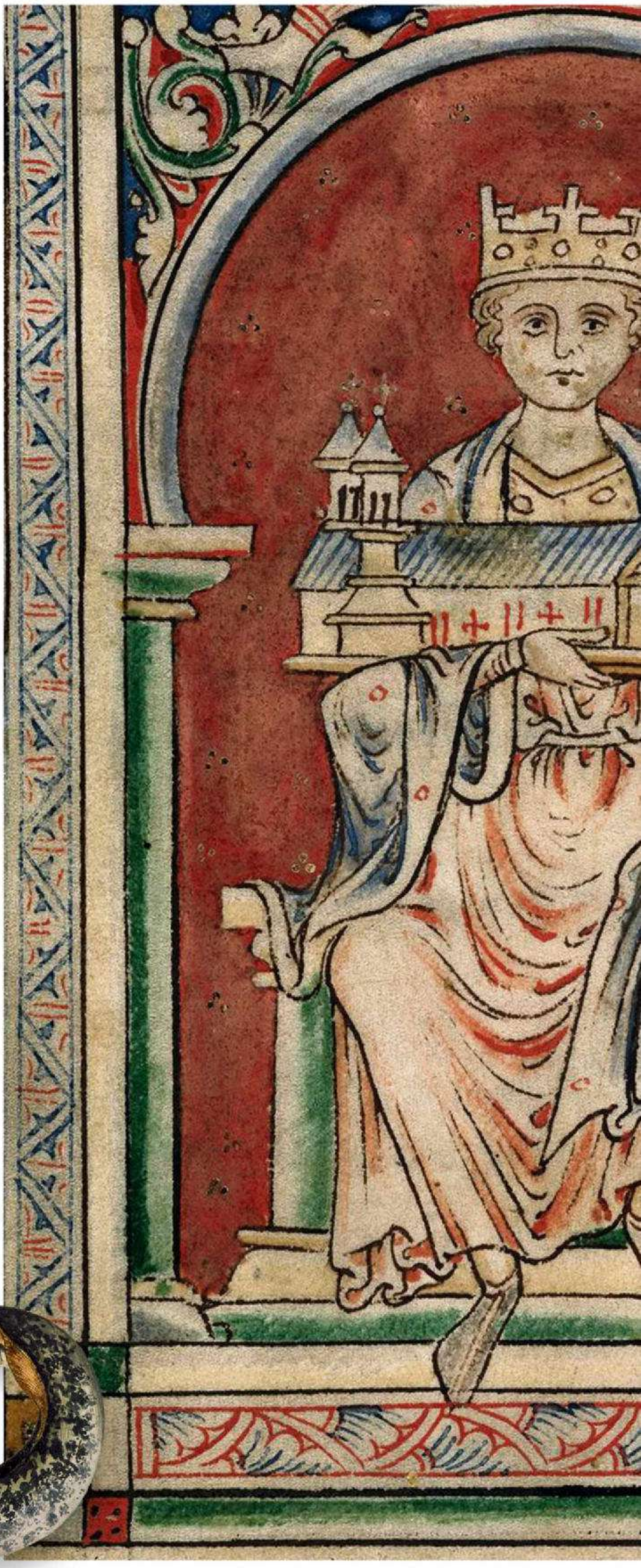
In the Middle Ages lampreys were a veritable delicacy among the elite, and apparently a favourite dish of Henry I. However, their properties in traditional medieval medicine were considered to have caused all manner of problems for Henry. According to chronicler Roger of Wendover, the lampreys had "mortally chilled the old man's blood", which caused a "sudden and violent illness".

To cool the blood in old age was considered by medieval standards a dangerous thing, based on the principles of the bodily humours. Humoral theory was standard practice in the Middle Ages, in the attempt to balance the body with four different physical states: sanguine (warm and moist), yellow bile (warm and dry), phlegm (cold and moist) and melancholic (cold and dry). Certain foods were believed to propagate various humours, so were meant to be eaten or avoided depending on personal needs. In old age, Henry I would have required warming foods – so his favourite dish of lampreys, which was considered cold and moist, was anything but healthy.

Despite the certainty of Roger of Wendover, it was not necessarily a mortal chill caused by the infamous lampreys that killed the king – it may have simply been a bad case of food poisoning. Whatever the truth of the matter, his death had significant consequences, resulting in a succession crisis that became a civil war in England. Lasting for more than a decade, this period became known to posterity as "The Anarchy".

Lampreys (like the one painted, below, in 1653) are blamed for the death of Henry I (right). These creatures feed on the blood of other fish, but were considered a delicacy by medieval nobles





The Red Army treks on skis during the Winter War of 1939–40 between the Soviet Union and Finland. Soldiers endured freezing cold and hostile terrain

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14 DECEMBER 1939

The League of Nations expels the Soviet Union for its aggression

The USSR's invasion of Finland sparks global condemnation

The difficulties that Russian forces have experienced in Ukraine since Vladimir Putin's invasion of the country in February 2022 are starkly reminiscent of the "Winter War" – a period of brutal conflict between the Soviet Union and Finland that came to a head in December 1939.

In November of that year, Soviet troops had invaded Finland after demanding that the Finnish cede major border territories. Security was named as the prime reason – the important Russian city of Saint Petersburg (then Leningrad) was only 20 miles from the Finnish border. When Finland refused, the Soviets invaded – only to face hostile citizens, unforgiving terrain and freezing temperatures. The Soviets may have had a superior fighting force of tanks, artillery and manpower, but the Finnish people put up a brave and mighty defence.

The Soviet Union faced a tidal wave of criticism from the west. After it bombed the Finnish capital Helsinki, resulting in the death of 100 citizens and the destruction of 50 buildings, the USSR was ejected from the League of Nations on 14 December 1939.

In a meeting of the Council of the League of Nations, headquartered at Geneva in Switzerland, seven of the 15 members of the council seated that day voted for expulsion of the Soviet Union "for acts against the Finnish state". As several of those seven were major powers in the west, the Soviet Union was expelled. In response, it accused the League of violating its own regulations by acting on a minority vote.

Finland hoped that western allies would bring liberation, and it put up months of rigorous defence, during which production lines of Molotov cocktails from Finnish alcohol companies were developed. Eventually, however, ground down to submission, the Finnish accepted the Soviet terms and a treaty. The president of Finland, Kyösti Kallio, on putting pen to paper, exclaimed: "Let the hand wither that signs this monstrous treaty!"

The Soviet forces captured a small percentage of the borderlands belonging to Finland, but the cost was far greater than the achievement. Many soldiers were lost to cold and hunger, and the failings of the war dealt a hefty blow to the integrity and martial skill of the Red Army.

Helen Carr is a historian and writer. Her latest book is *The Red Prince* (Oneworld, 2021)

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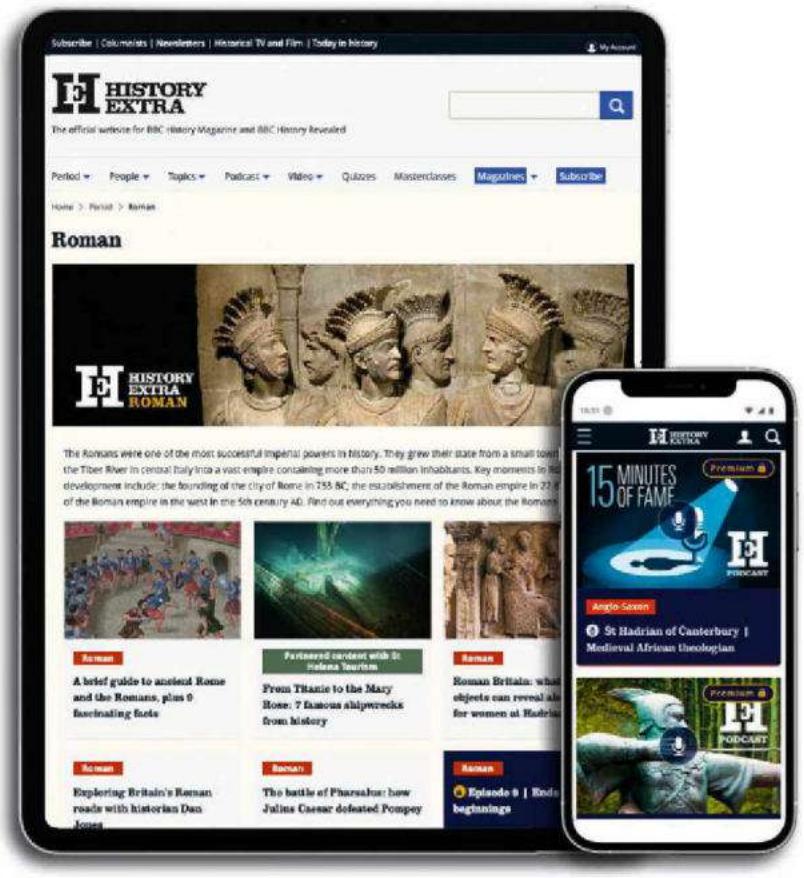

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Roger Moorhouse on the historical echoes in the war in Ukraine

Kavita Puri on the bitter, lasting legacy of the Spanish Civil War

Tracy Borman and **Michael Wood** on the history of royal funerals

COMPILED BY **MATT ELTON**

THE CONVERSATION

Grande dame of fiction Hilary Mantel, pictured in Oxford in 2017. Her novels about Thomas Cromwell garnered huge critical and popular acclaim

REMEMBERED

"Hilary Mantel changed the way we think about history"

Following the death of the *Wolf Hall* author in September, three experts pay tribute to her literary skill, research and insight – and highlight how she transformed the worlds of history and historical fiction

Diarmaid MacCulloch, emeritus professor of the history of the church at the University of Oxford: Eight years ago, Hilary Mantel and I enjoyably mused in this magazine on Henry VIII, Cromwell and *Wolf Hall*. Since then, her reputation has gone global; now, with shocking suddenness, we have lost her.

Had she never turned to history for inspiration, she would still be remembered as a novelist of supreme artistry. Indeed, I first encountered her through one of her contemporary novels, 2005's *Beyond Black*, and enthusiastically joined the fan club.

Today she may be best known for her studies of Cromwell and his fatally burdensome service to his king – three novels [2009's *Wolf Hall*, 2012's *Bring Up the Bodies* and 2020's *The Mirror and the Light*] later transformed into stage and TV events of exceptional quality. Yet still I would not describe her as a historical novelist but, rather, a writer whose keen eye could light up any scene, past or present, with rare clarity. No odds whether it was the flyblown landscape of modern west London towards Heathrow, the blood-spattered streets of revolutionary Paris or the dangerous splendour of the early Tudor court. None of Mantel's places are "real": they occupy a parallel universe unsettlingly adjacent to the periods that professional academics toil at recreating from primary sources.

She explored the past for herself with a historian's eye and a storyteller's sensibility. So often, she can help historians see what lay inside a character; first reading

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A scene from the stage adaptation of *The Mirror and the Light* at the Gielgud Theatre, London, 2021. Owen Emmerson praises Mantel's ability to craft complex, rounded renditions of historical characters

Wolf Hall, I was startled to recognise people whom I had sought along different routes. As I remarked eight years ago, I will always be grateful for her soaring imagination, which reaches parts of the past that historians can't or shouldn't.

Owen Emmerson, social and cultural historian and assistant curator at Hever Castle, Kent: The sudden death of Booker Prize-winning Hilary Mantel has understandably sent shock waves through the literary and historical world. Although she always proudly identified her art as historical fiction, she was also a colossal figure in the history world in her own right.

Mantel commanded the power to evoke the spirit of a time and place within a matter of just a few precisely crafted sentences. She had the skill to make both the ordinary and extraordinary compelling, paying as much thought to the execrable odours of a tannery endured by the many as she did to the feel of a gown of cloth of gold enjoyed by the few. But perhaps one of her most salient gifts to the historical world was to remind us that the way in which we classify historical actors today likely differs considerably from how their contemporaries perceived them.

When interviewed in 2015 at Hever Castle, Anne Boleyn's childhood home, Mantel revealed a profound understanding of, and respect for, the complexity of Anne's character. However, the rich grounding she had gained, rooted in extensive primary source research, did not dissuade Mantel from crafting a narrow and altogether more unlikeable vision of Boleyn as seen through Thomas Cromwell's eyes. Mantel's depiction of Thomas More was no less controversial, upturning the enduring image of the man of conscience crafted by playwright Robert Bolt in his 1960 work *A Man for All Seasons*. When the bishops of Shrewsbury and Plymouth spoke out against the "anti-Catholic" portrayal of More following the Bafta-winning BBC adaptation of *Wolf Hall*, Mantel fiercely defended her characterisation. "Sadly for the bishops, history isn't just what you would like it to be," she quipped.

> **"Mantel's was a kind of alchemy, combining the lyricism of a great writer with a deeply imaginative and caring engagement with the dead"**

Mantel was always candid about working beyond the confines of the historical record. Her sphere was the seamless fusion of that which time had saved in the "sieve" with the slippery realm of speculation forbidden to the historian. Never afraid of undermining current interpretations of historical actors, her genius was to allow even the most ardent historical adversaries the space for admiration, however reluctantly given.

In her writing, humanity could be found in the most inhumane moments. In one of the most haunting scenes in *Bring Up the Bodies,* Cromwell quietly wills Boleyn – moments from being cut down by a French swordsman – to lower her arm as she nervously fumbles with her hair. He may have conjured the most wicked, spurious charges to secure her downfall, but Mantel's Cromwell respected her enough to wish her a clean end.

Suzannah Lipscomb, historian, author and broadcaster and professor emerita at the University of Roehampton: There were great historical novelists before Dame Hilary Mantel, including some – such as Philippa Gregory – who brought the Tudor world to life. Yet historical fiction remained unfairly associated with cod English, a fixation on bonnets and bodices, and a barely disguised hankering for a reactionary past. Mantel changed that, uniquely elevating the genre. Hers was not history "minced" (as she put it) into fiction, but instead a kind of alchemy, achieved only by combining the research sensibilities (and efforts) of a historian, the literary lyricism of a great writer, and a rare philosopher's stone – a deeply imaginative and caring engagement with the dead.

Her knowledge of the primary sources was profound. Phrases from ambassadorial reports and contemporary chronicles animate her texts; she was convinced that lines given on record were tried off record first. She recognised the difference of the past without othering it: she never condescended to describe how clothing laced nor what a jerkin is. Her characterisations were incisive, brutal, transformative.

But Mantel's most brilliant intervention was to remind historians, no less than novelists, that our characters did not know how history would turn out. In a last note, she wrote: "What makes craft into art is the margin left for contingency, the space made for ambiguity." She created such space for her characters: the past, in her hands, felt immediate, urgent and uncertain. Reading her, we lived its hopes and horrors, we sensed its complexity and contradictions. Such was the power of this grande dame of fiction: she changed the way in which we think about history. H

Wolf Hall* is available to watch on BBC iPlayer: *bbc.co.uk/iplayer

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Read more about Hilary Mantel
including her conversation with Diarmaid MacCulloch: *historyextra.com/mantel*

Drawing on reserves Russian men called up to fight attend a ceremony to mark their departure, September 2022. Russia's attitude to the wellbeing of its troops is redolent of the Second World War, says Roger Moorhouse

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THE HISTORIAN'S VIEW

Roger Moorhouse on the ways in which recent developments in the **Russia-Ukraine conflict** echo the Second World War

It was "an army of beggars", one eyewitness wrote – a mass of soldiers seemingly as interested in plunder as in fighting. Another spoke of their outdated equipment, shabby uniforms and dilapidated vehicles, as likely to break down as to be destroyed in combat.

This description might adequately apply to Ukrainian reports of the Russian invasion of 2022. In fact, it is a portmanteau of reactions to the Soviet invasion of Poland more than eight decades ago, in September 1939. Every conflict, of course, calls up its own historical echoes, associated with the events themselves or the locations being fought over. In that respect, the war in Ukraine is no exception. Indeed, given that the Kremlin's methods of subverting its neighbours appear largely unchanged from Soviet times – including false-flag operations, deportations, disinformation and so-called referendums – it would be hard for the historian's antennae not to be twitching while watching the news from Ukraine.

The current Ukrainian counteroffensive in the northern Donbas, east of Kharkiv, is a good case in point. Kharkiv itself is redolent with brutal history from the 20th century. The city was fought over extensively during the Second World War, changing hands between German and Soviet forces four times between 1941 and 1943. The end result was that a city that once boasted a population of more than a million was reduced to a moonscape of refugees and ruins.

There are other similarities to current events. The second of those battles for Kharkiv, in May 1942, was largely fought along the line of the river Oskol around Kupyansk and Izyum – a line also reached by Ukrainian forces in September 2022. That earlier battle – a German victory – resulted in nearly 300,000 Soviet casualties. Russian and Ukrainian forces are today fighting atop their ancestors' bones.

Yet Kharkiv has another, even darker resonance. Its central prison, run by the Soviet People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs (or NKVD), was one of the three main execution sites used in the 1940 Katyń Massacre in which some 22,000 captured Polish officers and policemen were murdered in cold blood by their Soviet captors. Starobilsk, site of the camp in which the prisoners killed in Kharkiv were held, is currently being contested between Russian and Ukrainian forces. Few in the west will recognise its significance, when – or if – its name flits across our television screens.

> **"The Kremlin's methods appear largely unchanged from Soviet times. It would be hard for a historian's antennae not to be twitching"**

Failing morale

In a broader sense, the recent collapse of the Russian frontline is symbolic of a longer-term corrosion of Russian forces through institutionalised corruption and technological backwardness. It might be argued, of course, that corruption and backwardness are nothing new to Russian military culture, and that they can be adequately counterbalanced by coercion and propaganda. To some extent that is correct but, crucially, failing morale among Russian troops, coupled with the collapse of the Kremlin's propaganda rationale for the invasion – and the expectation that Russian forces would be welcomed in Ukraine – has compounded those deeper ills. Many Russian soldiers, it seems, are no longer sure what they are fighting for. History has countless examples of how damaging a lack of faith in the cause can be.

That failing morale has hardly been helped, of course, by the evident crisis in supply in the Russian army. Russian and Soviet armies have rarely shown much

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> **" Echoes of the past are evident in the use of so-called referendums – another tactic from 1940 "**

concern for the welfare of their troops. Some Red Army soldiers invading Poland in 1939 did so lacking boots or even rifles – testament to a mentality that viewed the "ordinary" soldier as thoroughly expendable: a tool to be used and then discarded, replaced by another unfortunate.

The invasion of Ukraine shows us that little has changed in this regard. Ill-trained and ill-supplied, with long-range missiles hampering their support infrastructure and arms and fuel dumps, Russian soldiers in the field appear to find themselves more than usually abandoned to their fate. Images of the new wave of Russian reservists, often supplied with antiquated Soviet-era equipment, will do little to assuage their concerns.

Disturbing parallels

All of which suggests an army in a degree of disarray, as the partial Russian collapse in recent months might confirm. If we are being optimistic, we might suggest that it is reminiscent – albeit on a much smaller scale – of Operation Bagration, the Soviet summer offensive of 1944 that effectively destroyed German Army Group Centre and opened the very real probability of a German defeat.

Red Army troops meet German counterparts at Brest-Litovsk, September 1939. During the invasion of Poland, many Soviet soldiers were poorly equipped

It is a common maxim that history repeats itself. It doesn't, of course, but it sometimes creates echoes. Some are coincidences with no real significance. Sometimes, however, those echoes can reveal a deeper truth. In the case of this war, both categories are present. Superficial coincidences abound, thrown up by accidents of geography or the simple fact that the return of armoured warfare to the European continent was always bound to call forth comparisons to the last time such horrors were seen.

Yet some of the echoes created by the Russian invasion of Ukraine are not accidental or superficial but instead betray the deeper truth of the Kremlin's method of war. For those with an understanding of the history, those echoes are plainly evident in the arrogant rhetoric about "the Russian world" that opened the invasion, so redolent of the spurious "spheres of influence" that accompanied the war in 1939.

They are evident in the Kremlin's mealy-mouthed mendacity in describing the war as a "special military operation", just as the 1939 Soviet invasion of Poland was officially not an invasion, the word "war" being forbidden. They are evident in the so-called referendums – another tactic from 1940 – called to supposedly legitimatise Russia's conquests, the results having long since been pre-ordained.

They are evident in the forced deportations of hundreds of thousands of Ukrainian civilians to the Russian interior, a crime strangely under-reported in the western media yet instantly recognisable to the countless Poles, Lithuanians, Latvians and Estonians whose forebears suffered the same grim fate in 1940 and after. And they are evident in the atrocities committed by Russian forces against civilian populations: the epidemic of rape grimly reminiscent of the Red Army's brutal conquest of Berlin in 1945, the casual looting of everyday objects, and the victims of torture, bodies tossed into mass graves with contempt.

The echoes, then, can be overwhelming, but they shouldn't deafen us to the real significance of what is happening today. The war in Ukraine is not a re-enactment or a greatest-hits medley. It is, instead, to a large extent a battle for the future of Europe itself. In that, Ukraine is attempting to write a new chapter in its own history, looking forward not back. And, though we are wise to be cognisant of the history, we would do well to recognise the significance of that fact. **H**

Roger Moorhouse is an author and historian whose books include *First to Fight: The Polish War 1939* (Bodley Head, 2019)

HISTORY NEWS IN BRIEF

Cave finds reveal "earliest evidence of amputation"

Remains discovered in Indonesian Borneo appear to bear evidence of surgical amputation carried out 31,000 years ago – more than 24,000 years before the earliest previously recorded amputation. The bones, found in a cave in East Kalimantan, are those of an individual whose left leg had been partially removed during childhood. Experts think they would then have been cared for by their community until they died in their late teens or early twenties.

These 3,500-year-old jugs, discovered at a site near Tel Aviv, feature traces of opium

Ancient pottery may point to first known use of opium

Archaeologists working at an ancient burial site in Israel have uncovered evidence of what may be the earliest known use of opium. Traces of the narcotic were found in pottery vessels dating from roughly 3,500 years ago and unearthed in 2012 in the town of Yehud, seven miles from Tel Aviv. Experts suggest that the drug may have been used to help mourners connect to the dead, or to aid a spirit on its journey into the next life.

Anglo-Saxon England "saw mass European migration"

Analysis of human remains from the early Anglo-Saxon era has revealed that a wave of people migrated to parts of Britain from Europe. According to Duncan Sayer, who worked on the aDNA project, "What it says is, yes, there is mass migration. You can't argue with that any more. So what we could do is start to talk about what that migration actually is, who the people are and… how they build communities." **H**

To listen to an interview with the authors of the study, visit *historyextra.com/podcast*

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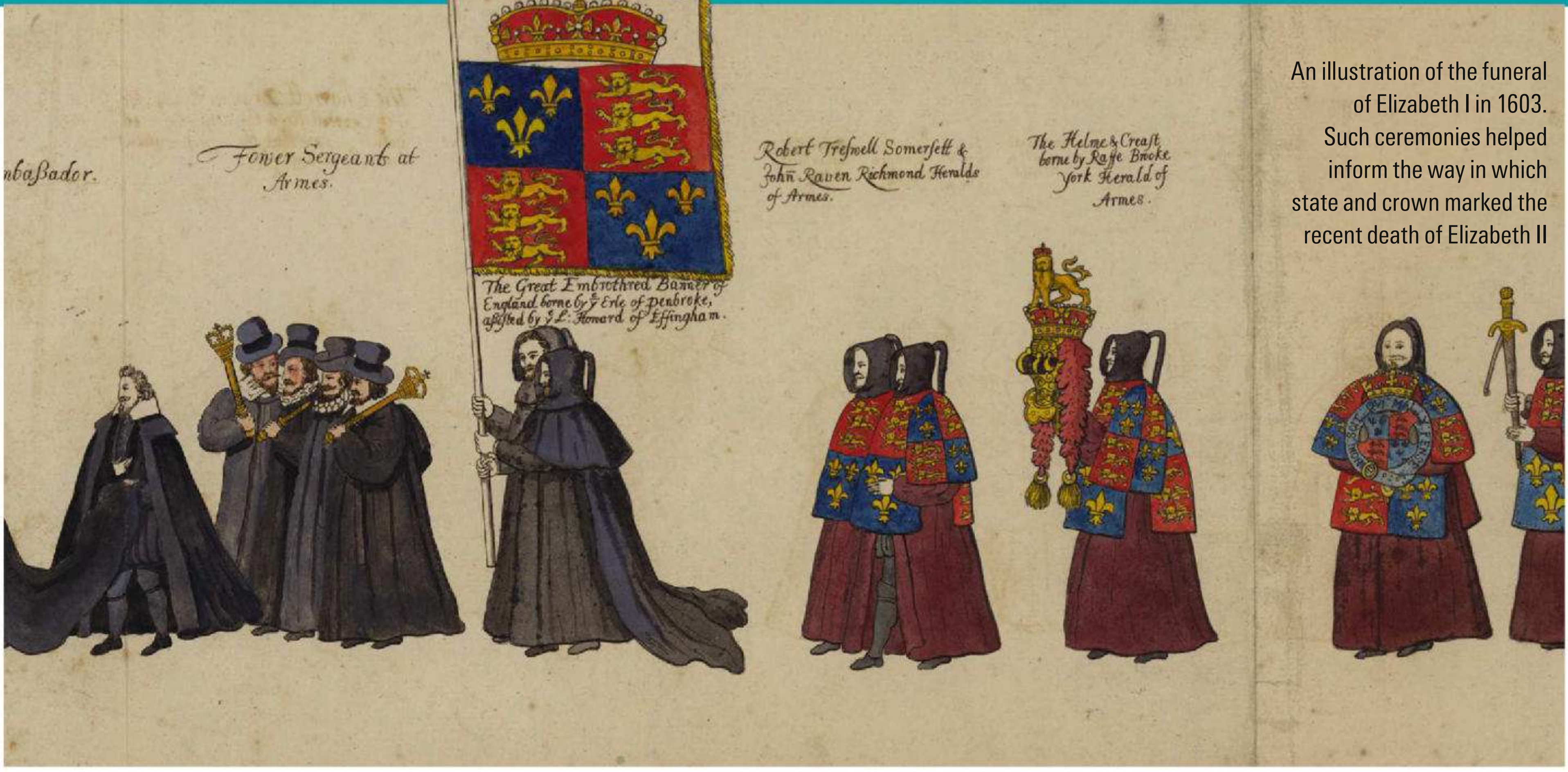
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Fower Sergeants at Armes.
The Great Embrothred Banner of England borne by ye Erle of Pembroke, assisted by ye L: Howard of Effingham.
Robert Treswell Somersett & John Raven Richmond Heralds of Armes.
The Helme & Creast borne by Raffe Brooke York Herald of Armes.

An illustration of the funeral of Elizabeth I in 1603. Such ceremonies helped inform the way in which state and crown marked the recent death of Elizabeth II

EXPLAINER

The history that shaped the **Queen's funeral**

People around the world were transfixed by the scale and splendour of Elizabeth II's funeral in September – a ceremony that drew explicitly on centuries of British royal traditions. **TRACY BORMAN** reveals how such events have changed, yet remained the same, across generations

The funeral of Queen Elizabeth II on 19 September broke an array of records. It was the UK's biggest security operation, with 10,000 police officers deployed in the capital. It was attended by 500 world leaders, with almost 6,000 military personnel taking part in a meticulously choreographed operation. In short, it was the largest and most impressive royal state funeral in British history – fitting, given that Elizabeth II was the country's longest-reigning monarch.

The ceremony may well prove to be the apogee of royal funerals. With hints of a more frugal, slimmed-down version of monarchy from Charles III's reign onwards, we will probably never see anything like it again. Though its scale might have been unprecedented, it was the result of centuries of tradition surrounding royal funerals.

One of the earliest burials for which we have detailed evidence was uncovered at Sutton Hoo in Suffolk on the eve of the Second World War. Archaeologists found a burial, dating from the early seventh century, of incomparable richness. Musical instruments and intricately carved weaponry rendered from precious metals and gems were placed in a huge ship intended to convey the deceased to the afterlife. The presence of diplomatic gifts from Scandinavia hint at someone well-respected and well-connected, while the shoulder clasps modelled on those worn by Roman emperors are symbolic of power. Together, they indicate someone of exceptionally high, likely royal, status – possibly Rædwald, king of East Anglia.

Early royal funerals often took place over two days, with the state ceremonies on the first day and the interment on the second. Over the centuries this was condensed to a single day, though often with the same delineation between the more public funeral service and the more private interment – as was the case with Elizabeth II. For centuries, royal funerals were held after sunset, as was also the case with royal weddings and christenings. Only gradually, as the monarchy became more conscious of the need to project its magnificence to the people (particularly after the Restoration in 1660), did funerals shift to daylight hours. For much of the crown's history, a new monarch did not attend the funeral of his or her late predecessor, possibly because of a superstitious dread of associating themselves too closely with death.

From the 14th century on, it became a tradition for an effigy of the dead monarch to be carried either on or near the coffin during royal funerals. This would be startlingly lifelike and dressed in the late sovereign's coronation robes to heighten the effect. Many of the effigies still survive in Westminster Abbey, and reveal fascinating details. For example, the twisted face of Edward III suggests he died of a stroke, while the effigy of Mary I has a distended stomach – a symptom either of the phantom pregnancy she experienced shortly before her death or of an ovarian tumour.

The dress code for royal funerals has traditionally featured black – lots of it. Beautifully detailed illustrations of Elizabeth I's funeral procession in 1603 still survive in the British Library. They show the long procession of mourners swathed in full-length black mourning cloaks and hoods. Colour comes from the heralds, who wore tabards over their mourning cloaks and carried the late monarch's achievements listed on a colourful banner. Ironically, given that she spent 40 years in black after the death of her beloved Albert, Victoria ordered that there should be no black cloaks or

BRIDGEMAN

The Queen's coffin, adorned with sceptre, crown and orb. The ceremony symbolises the monarchy's continuity, says Tracy Borman

drapes for her own funeral in 1901, and that the pall covering her coffin should be white.

In general, however, royal funerals in recent times owe much to Victoria – as is the case with so many royal traditions. It is largely thanks to her that they have such a strong military flavour. She expressed a desire to be buried as "a soldier's daughter" – her father Edward, Duke of Kent, had been commander-in-chief of British forces in the Maritime Provinces of North America. In place of the usual peers, privy councillors and household staff that had dominated the procession for centuries, military personnel were now on prominent display. Her pallbearers were equerries rather than dukes and, for the first time, a gun carriage was employed to convey the queen's coffin.

In the long history of royal funerals, things haven't always gone to plan. During the ceremony for William the Conqueror at Saint-Étienne in 1087, one of the houses nearby caught fire, "sending up great balls of flame". The blaze quickly spread to neighbouring houses, sending the congregation into a panic. Many of the guests fled, leaving the monks to hastily lay their late ruler to rest. Then, as they attempted to force William's bloated corpse into a sarcophagus that was too small, the body suddenly burst open, emitting "an intolerable stench that soon filled the entire church".

Rather less grisly was the mishap that befell Victoria's funeral. During the procession, horses pulling the gun carriage that bore her coffin reared up and broke their harnesses, and could not be reattached. "You would think that the English monarchy had not been buried since the time of Alfred," one eyewitness scornfully remarked.

The elaborate ceremony surrounding royal funerals has two distinct purposes. One is, of course, honouring the deceased sovereign – but the other, more subtle purpose is to symbolise the continuity that lies at the heart of the British monarchy. This was in full evidence at Elizabeth II's funeral, in the moving of the imperial crown, orb and sceptre from her coffin to the altar of St George's Chapel, the relentless march of the military ranks, and the prominence of the new King Charles III and his heirs in the procession. As Lord Lyndhurst, who served three 19th-century monarchs as Lord High Chancellor, put it: "The sovereign always exists; the person only is changed."

"Tradition fetters your limits. The past clogs the present." So reflected Wallis Simpson about the state of the UK – and, as far as the country itself was concerned, she may have had a point. But the exact opposite is true of the monarchy. For more than 1,000 years it has weathered crises that looked set to consign it to the pages of history. The key to its survival has been the unchanging ceremonies that have defined the crown over the centuries, and which still fascinate and inspire millions of people around the globe. As the Whig politician Lord Halifax pointed out to Victoria's private secretary: "The mass of people expect a king or queen to look and play the part. They want to see a crown and sceptre and all that sort of thing. They want the gilding for their money." This "gilding" in turn reinforces the sense of continuity that the monarchy symbolises, which – as well as helping to ensure a smooth succession after the death of a monarch – offers a much-needed sense of certainty in a rapidly changing world. H

Tracy Borman is an author, historian and broadcaster. Her latest book is *Crown & Sceptre: 1,000 Years of Kings and Queens* (Hodder, 2022)

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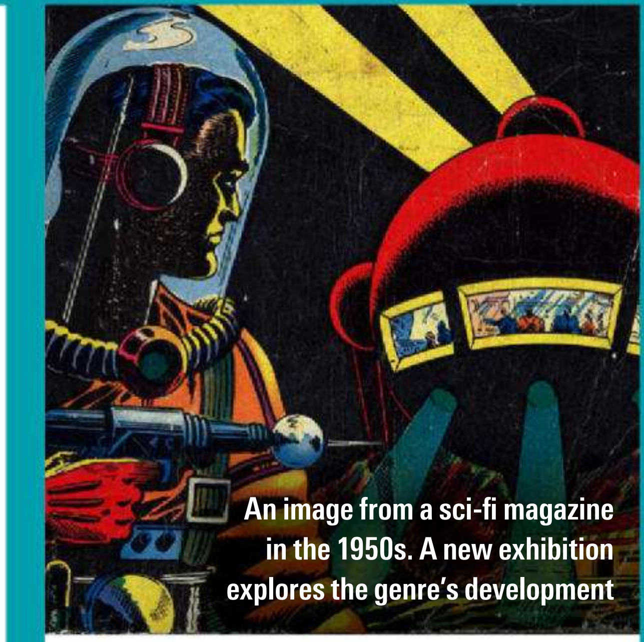

An image from a sci-fi magazine in the 1950s. A new exhibition explores the genre's development

TRENDING
SCIENCE FICTION

A new exhibition, Science Fiction: Voyage to the Edge of Imagination – running at London's Science Museum until 4 May – explores the genre's evolution and power to predict the future. We spoke to one of its contributors, Roger Luckhurst.

Sci-fi is about imagining the future, so what can it tell us about the past? Although none of us know what the future will be, you can extrapolate from what's happening in the present – and so some people call science fiction "the literature of extrapolation". It's as much about how people have imagined the future as it is about the future itself.

Are there any periods about which sci-fi is particularly revealing? A crucial moment is 1945, because of the first use of the atom bomb. Science fiction authors had imagined it for decades: HG Wells predicted such a weapon in 1914, for instance, estimating it would emerge in roughly 1945. And, of course, it created implacably opposed blocs between the USSR and the US, which sparked lots of sci-fi imagining nuclear disasters of various kinds – but also a drive to try to think beyond the political divisions.

Has our view of sci-fi as a genre changed in recent years? It's so important to have a multinational perspective on science fiction. We're starting to understand that, although HG Wells has often been referred to as "the father of science fiction", plenty of other traditions were also emerging at around the same time in many other nations. H

Hear more of this conversation on our podcast: *historyextra.com/podcast*

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HIDDEN HISTORIES

KAVITA PURI explores lesser-known stories from our past

"The Spanish Civil War is personal. Nearly every family has a link to it"

Kavita Puri is a journalist, author and broadcaster. Her BBC Radio 4 series *Three Pounds in My Pocket* is currently available on BBC Sounds

I WAS SHOCKED TO READ RECENTLY THAT THERE are still an estimated 114,000 bodies in unmarked mass graves in Spain. They are victims of the Spanish Civil War, fought between 1936 and 1939 between Republicans, loyal to the nation's left-leaning government, and Nationalists, led by a military junta among which Francisco Franco played a key role. The sheer extent of the mass graves represents what cultural anthropologist Francisco Ferrándiz has called "an underground landscape of terror".

Some of the bodies were excavated near a place I visit regularly, in one of four close villages in rural southern Spain. In the civil war, two were Republican, two Nationalist. The battlements still exist in the ground. But that time is rarely spoken of, when friends, neighbours and even families were divided. Taking my cues from those around me, I know not to openly discuss the war. I have a hundred questions, but know it's best not to ask them, and will probably never get answers.

The Nationalist victory in 1939 saw Franco rule Spain as dictator until his death in 1975. In the years that followed, political consensus favoured a decision known as the Pact of Forgetting, which aimed to move forward by not directly confronting the legacy of the past – as if you can be made to forget. There was no truth and reconciliation commission, no reckoning with history. A 1977 law even prevented legal proceedings for crimes committed during the civil war and subsequent dictatorship.

Change, when it finally came at the turn of the century, was led by grandchildren of some of the people who had experienced those horrors. They challenged the pact and demanded reform and, in 2000, the Association for the Recovery of Historical Memory was founded. It grew out of the quest by a sociologist, Emilio Silva-Barrera, to locate and identify the remains of his grandfather, who was shot by Nationalist forces in 1936.

In 2007, Spain's socialist prime minister, José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero, instigated the Historical Memory Law to move on from the Pact of Forgetting. The government supported the funding of exhumations, but this stopped once the opposition party took power in 2011.

Now national memory is changing once again. In 2018, the socialist government returned to power, and made the rehabilitation of the victims of the Franco era one of its priorities. In 2019 Franco's remains were removed from a vast mausoleum near Madrid and transferred to a family plot. A bill known as the Democratic Memory Law was passed by parliament in early October, which plans to make unearthing the mass graves a state responsibility. The bill's aims include the creation of a DNA database to help identify remains found in mass graves and prevent publicly funded institutions from glorifying Franco's dictatorship. It also looks set to annul criminal convictions of opponents of the dictatorship, and appoint a prosecutor to probe human rights abuses across the decades from the 1930s to the 1970s. In a nation still divided over the legacy, all of this has been controversial, and rightwing opponents reacted angrily to the announcement.

Memory and how to deal with crimes of the past is still a live and divisive issue in Spain, and to this day there is no museum to this defining event in Spanish history. More than that, the Spanish Civil War is personal: nearly every Spanish family has a connection to it. How we remember a difficult past changes in time, interpreted and reinterpreted not only by historians but also by politicians and each new generation. But the question lingers: how far can a nation ever really heal when the fate of so many family members remains unknown, and with the knowledge that they could be buried under the earth? H

Republican soldiers near Madrid, 1936. Decades after the civil war and subsequent dictatorship, the events of the era remain deeply divisive in Spain

© ROBERT CAPA–MAGNUM PHOTOS

MICHAEL WOOD ON...
THE FUNERAL OF QUEEN ELIZABETH II

"We paid respect to the late monarch but also projected an idea of Britain"

WATCHING THE DRAMA OF THE QUEEN'S funeral unfold, I had a strong sense that future historians will see this moment as the end of the postwar world.

The funeral was an epic piece of theatre. Though its rituals were largely invented in the 20th century, their emotional power came from a still-shared belief in the values and stories dramatised in the ceremony. We commemorated and paid respect to the late monarch – but we also projected an idea of Britain steeped in empire and military history as well as constitutional monarchy. Queen Elizabeth's life linked us directly to the wartime generation, and her reign carried us across the astonishing changes we have seen both in our global power and at home in society, class, race and religion.

I was reminded of Victoria's diamond jubilee in 1897 – another moment when a long reign was drawing to a close, with the sense of the end of an age. War was on the horizon, and old certainties were slipping away. It was then that Kipling wrote his prophetic poem *Recessional*, with its biblical warning about imperial boasting and jingoism: "Our navies melt away;/ On dune and headland sinks the fire:/ Lo, all our pomp of yesterday/ Is one with Nineveh and Tyre!… Lest we forget – lest we forget!"

How amazing to think that Queen Elizabeth's reign lasted more than half of the intervening period between 1897 and the present day – and to see that Kipling's poem still speaks to us. Adjusting to our post-imperial place in the world is taking some time!

Only 10 years ago, the opening ceremony of the 2012 Olympics showed us another vision of Britain. With extraordinary boldness, "Isles of Wonder" told a historical tale of a small nation with a great history: the transition from a "green and pleasant land" through industrial revolution to welfare state, pop culture, the white heat of technology and the digital revolution.

Fired by William Blake's *Jerusalem*, Danny Boyle's visionary love letter to Britain and its peoples set out to be a statement of where we had come from and who we are now: an open society, multiracial and multicultural, optimistic, humorous and youthful. Surely the most surprising and moving cultural event this country has ever seen, it was idealised, to be sure, but it articulated the idea that post-imperial Britain could begin to walk into the future with a new tone, shedding the burden of the past.

The ceremony became a byword for a new approach, not only to British culture but to Britishness itself. Politicians were soon using it as shorthand for a new kind of patriotism – a kind, as one commentator put it, "that does not lament a vanished Britain but loves the country that has changed, that had succeeded not in spite of its Britishness but because of its Britishness, delighting viewers here and around the world by rooting itself in the authentic stories and spirit of these islands".

But we did not shed the burden of the past. Within five years, nostalgic nationalistic politics swept us to Brexit, driven by a very different view of national history and identity – an ideologically motivated gamble with the wealth and wellbeing of the nation.

And now our Queen of 70 years has gone. The peoples of our divided nations find themselves in a very difficult place, as the gap widens between the promise and the reality of our post-Brexit role in the world.

At root this is about the meaning of our history. Despite the optimism of the 2012 Olympics, for many commentators the Brexit vote showed that we haven't yet come to terms with our past, who we are, and who we want to be. There are now, for example, fiercely contested debates about the empire and slavery, and their role in the making of modern Britain. For years, many of us have been arguing for the empire to be at the centre of the school history curriculum – it is, after all, the one historical event that shaped us all. But this is still proving a very difficult and contentious conversation, one that will make progress only with greater honesty and openness.

Isn't this what history is for, after all? The historian's job in furthering public understanding of the past is to help people understand themselves and their society in a increasingly dangerous and polarised world. We have to tell all the important stories, truthfully and with empathy – hard as that may be.

Michael Wood is professor of public history at the University of Manchester. He has presented numerous BBC series, and his most recent book is an updated version of *In Search of the Dark Ages* (BBC, 2022). His Twitter handle is @mayavision

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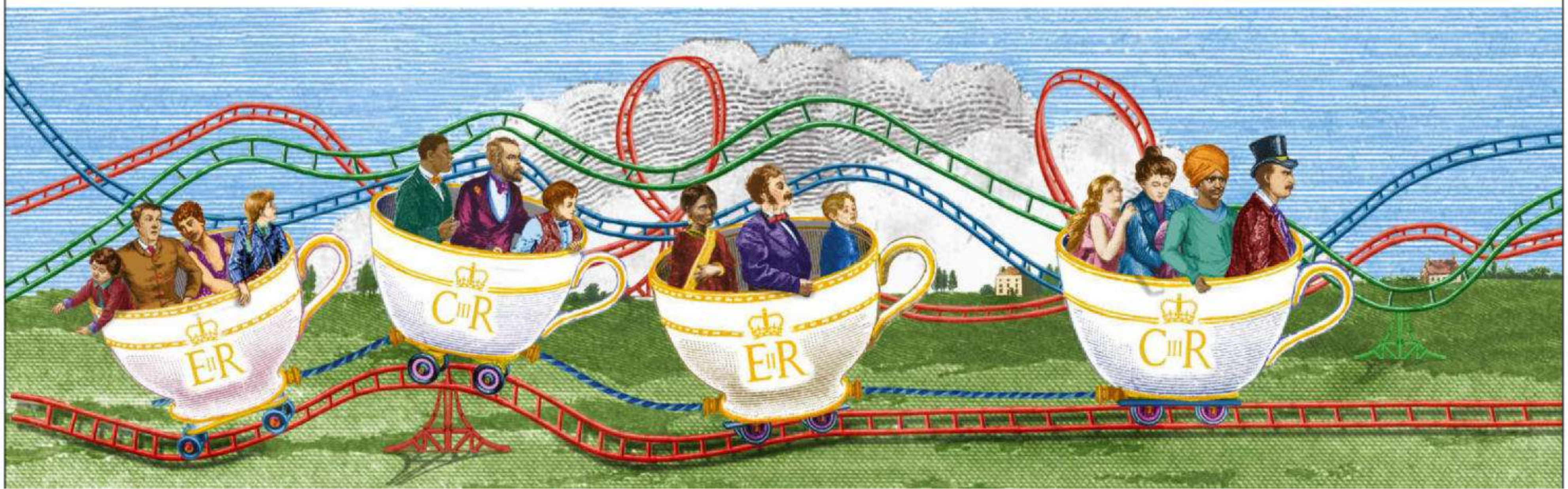

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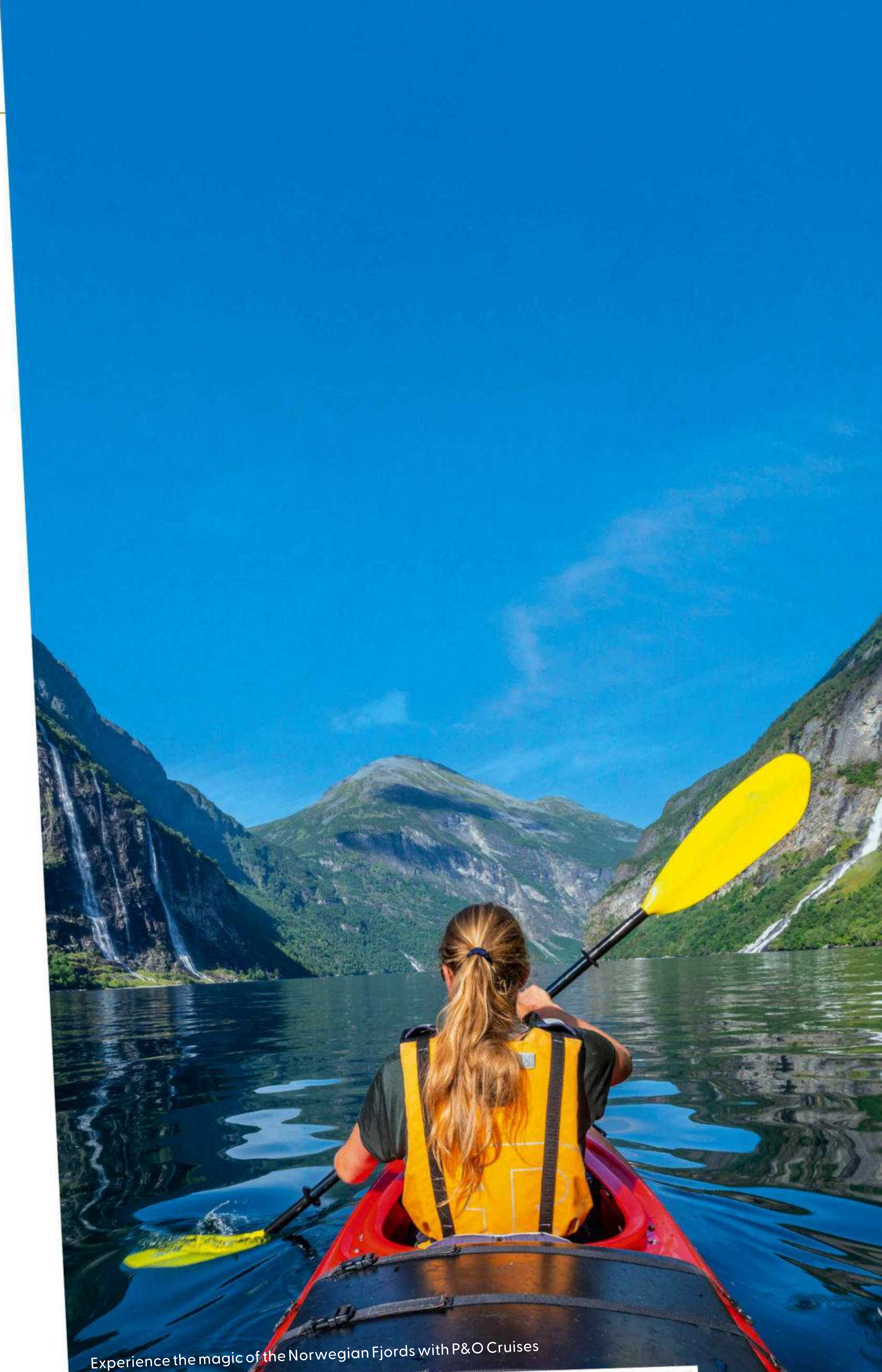

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LETTERS

Meringue was a novel (and not always digestible) treat after wartime rations, as reader Dr Paul Sawbridge recalls

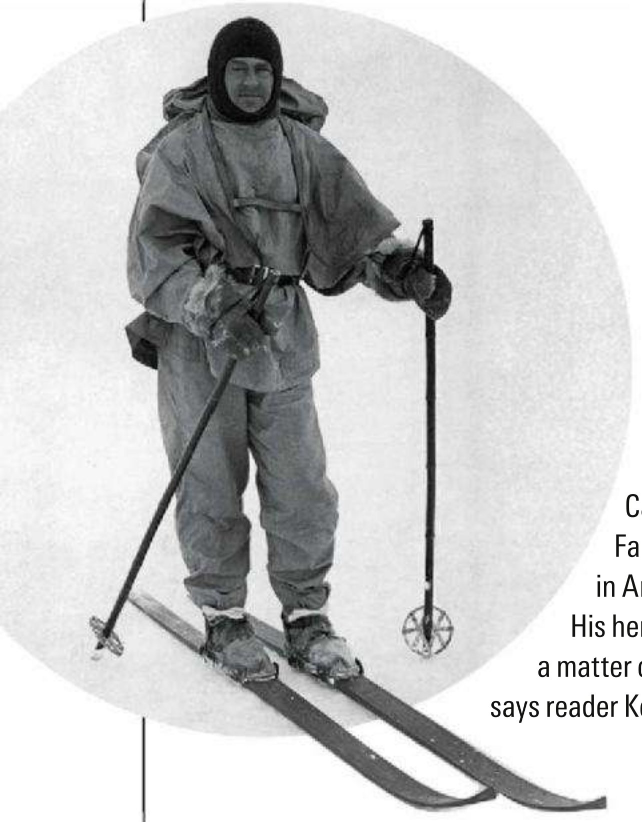
LETTER OF THE MONTH

Cold, hard facts

The excellent article by Robert Blackmore (*Why We Need to Get Our Facts Straight*, November) reminded me of the time I first got interested in debating and politics. In my final year in junior school in 1962 I read a history book on British heroes, and remember vividly how it painted Captain Scott as a brave man in his endeavour to reach the south pole.

It was such an engaging story. So I was shocked when, at my secondary modern school two years later, our respected history teacher gave his opinion. Scott had been ill prepared, he said, and wrong to pursue the expedition that cost his life and those of others. I then realised the importance of trying to distinguish between opinion and fact. It is a fact that Scott reached the south pole in 1912, and that great courage would have been needed in the severe conditions. But as to whether his bravery made him a hero, that would be an opinion. This realisation gave me plenty to think about – and still makes history so interesting to me.

Keith Lodge, Cottingham



Captain Robert Falcon Scott in Antarctica. His heroism is a matter of opinion, says reader Keith Lodge

ALISON WEIR
QUEENS OF THE AGE OF CHIVALRY

We reward the Letter of the Month writer with a copy of a new history book. This issue, that is **Queens of the Age of Chivalry** by Alison Weir. You can read our review on page 80

New religion?

I always enjoy reading Janina Ramirez, but did she really mean to imply in her text on the Loftus Princess (*Trailblazing Medieval Women*, September) that Christianity was new in England in AD 597? "The woman… was tying herself to the new religion that was making an impact in England around the arrival of St Augustine."

Christianity had already arrived with the Romans, the first known martyr being Alban in about AD 209. When Augustine came in AD 597, the queen of Kent was already a Christian, and Columba had been converting the Picts for more than 30 years. Indeed, the location of Loftus, north of Whitby, might suggest that the "princess" was "tying herself" to the Celtic form of Christianity prevalent in the north at that time. Augustine was significant, but the religion he promoted wasn't new in England.

Fen Flack, Worcestershire

An ill wind

I found your article on the possible causes of the loss of the *Mary Rose* fascinating (*What Doomed the Mary Rose?* November). I'd like to add a couple of thoughts.

First, square-rigged sailing ships normally roll as they sail – they don't progress in the serene, upright fashion you see in the movies. If the *Mary Rose* had sails set while some of its lower ports were still open, its ports would have rolled under the water line and a capsize would have been inevitable.

Second, the ship was close to land. All sailors know that wind near land is variable and unpredictable. Cliffs, hills, trees and even large buildings cause wind to be diverted and channelled, creating areas of calm on the sea, followed by others where strong gusts blow. This would have affected the *Mary Rose* if it had a lot of sails set because of the light winds that day.

Consider the fate of the Swedish warship *Vasa*. Sailing through Stockholm harbour on its maiden voyage on a balmy August day in 1628, all of its ports were open to show off the carvings inside. A sudden gust caused it to roll, its ports dipped under the waterline, and it capsized – just like the *Mary Rose*.

The main question for me is: why were the ship's lower ports still open when the sails were set? Surely the skipper must be held responsible.

Brian Hackett, Denby Dale

Food fight

I was interested to read *The Stomach for the Fight* (October), which got me thinking about how little is known generally about food that was eaten in the UK during the Second World War.

I am old enough to remember being taken by my mother to a British Restaurant in Bolton. Established by the Ministry of Food, these were run by local authorities or voluntary agencies, were not subject to food rationing and were run on a not-for-profit basis. The meals were pretty basic but cheap and available to all.

Food rationing varied between different categories of people – troops, war workers and the wider public, for example. The Ministry of Food was particularly concerned about vitamin C intake in the general population. Only very small quantities of fruit could be imported during the war; citrus fruits and bananas were non-existent, and even supplies of local apples were sparse and seasonally dependent. Cabbage therefore became a source of vitamin C and a staple in most meals.

It should also be remembered that food rationing lasted well into the 1950s. I have particular memories of my mother making meringues sometime after the war was over, when milk, eggs and sugar became available. She thought this would be a great treat. However, I had been brought up on a diet of dried egg powder, dried milk and very little sugar – so meringues made me violently sick!

Dr Paul Sawbridge, Stroud

Tribal beliefs

Thank you for Michael Wood's continuing contributions, which are both pithy and edifying.

I must, however, challenge his view that "the long prehistory of religion remains largely unknowable" (October).

On this I would like to recommend Yuval Noah Harari's [2011 book] *Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind*. Harari makes a powerful case – based on archaeological finds of anthropomorphic figures and early Gaia figurines – that

A Minoan idol depicting a female figure, c2000 BC. Reader Steve Bowyer makes the case for religion as a key part of early human tribalism

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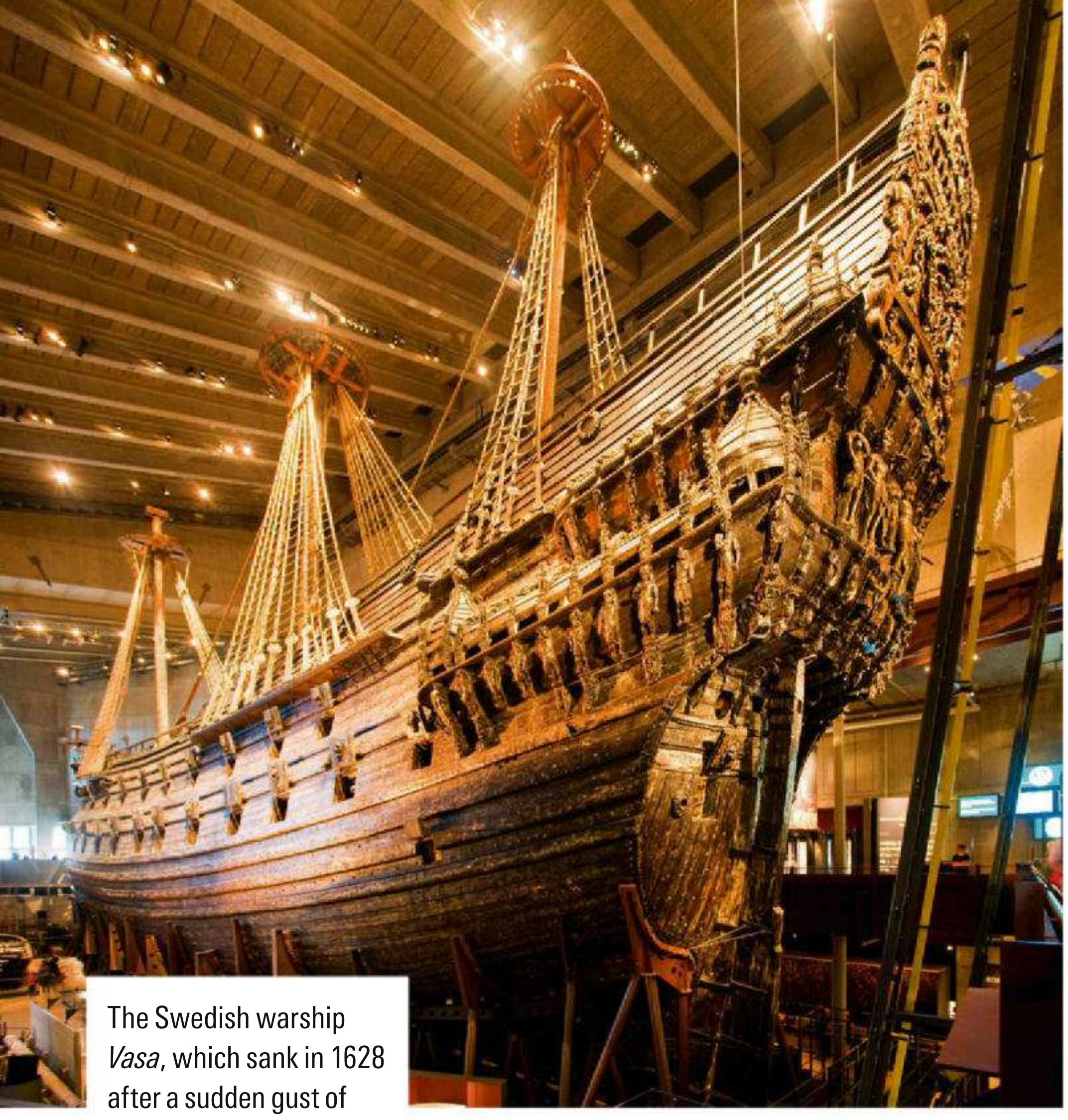

The Swedish warship *Vasa*, which sank in 1628 after a sudden gust of wind caused it to capsize. Reader Brian Hackett suggests that unpredictable winds may also have led to the loss of the *Mary Rose* in 1545

early religions underpinned the tribalism that enabled modern humans to overpower the (putatively more intelligent but individual) Neanderthals. Indeed, aspects of tribalism run through the course of religious evolution, and have played a part in conflicts between communities, and in controlling elements of each religion's own society.

The "need for auspiciousness", as Wood suggests, undoubtedly played a part in the later evolution of religion, along with a human need to find a greater meaning to life. But the origins of religion seem far more likely to lie in tribal identity and the advantages it confers.

Steve Bowyer, Leicester

Celebrating Richard's champion

Thanks to Mike Pitts for reminding us that 10 years have passed since the exciting time when Richard III's body was rediscovered and identified (*When Richard Rose Again*, October). Many people contributed to the discovery, but I think Philippa Langley is a heroine for keeping the faith. Josephine Tey [pen name of Elizabeth MacKintosh] is another, for believing what cannot yet be proved: "That the king had been an honourable man wrongly censured by posterity."

Linda Hepburn, Chatham

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Marching into infamy

RJB Bosworth reveals how the March on Rome – which saw Benito Mussolini's Fascist squads seize power a century ago – set Italy on a path to totalitarianism

Power surge
Fascists march on Rome, October 1922. Benito Mussolini's ascent to power would set Italy on a road to dictatorship and inspire far-right politicians including Adolf Hitler

Voice of dissent
The liberal politician Giovanni Amendola in 1923. His attempts to thwart the Fascist power grab a year earlier ended in failure

The night of 27–28 October 1922 was a restless one for the Amendola family in their Rome flat. It was raining heavily, perhaps a portent of approaching winter. The eldest of four children in the family, Giorgio, was approaching his 15th birthday. More than 50 years later, he would record his memory of those days.

Giorgio was far from the only person to chronicle the extraordinary events of October 1922, but what gives his account added potency is the fact that his father, Giovanni, was one of the most powerful men in Italy. Giovanni held the post of minister of colonies in Italy's government – and as the rain tumbled down, that government was on the brink of collapse.

Ever since Italy's states had coalesced into a unified nation in the 1860s, successive governments had been plagued by infighting and weakness. Things were little different in the autumn of 1922. The administration in which Giovanni served found itself pulled this way and that by various competing political interests, each jockeying for power.

Luigi Facta, Italy's prime minister, was a Liberal. Socialists had had their party since 1892, although, in recent months, its supporters, enthused or embarrassed by Russian revolution, had split into three: communist, maximalist and reformist. Catholics had established their *Partito Popolare* (Popular Party) on 18 January 1919.

Most ominously, on 9 November 1921, an ex-socialist journalist named Benito Mussolini, who had been expelled from his party in November 1914 when he favoured Italian participation in the First World War, rallied his followers into a "National Fascist Party" (PNF). It was known to be anti-Marxist and patriotic and to find its major base among the middle and lower middle classes. Just what else "Fascism" meant was scarcely yet established. But the Fascists had one undeniable characteristic: they were unapologetically violent. And, for the Amendola family, that proclivity for brutality would have terrible consequences.

Capital under attack

As the power of the Fascists had grown in the three years following their formation in the spring of 1919, so had Benito Mussolini's appetite for power. By the early weeks of October 1922, he and his chief associates had decided that they could not wait for a "parliamentary solution" to the question of who should hold power in Italy. Armed action, Mussolini stated, was "needed at once or we shall never do it". What followed – the "March on Rome" – would change the course of Italian history, and send shockwaves coursing across the globe.

Mussolini's armed "squads" had already, over the past few months, marched into a number of northern Italian cities and seized municipal power. Now, on 24 October, the party's national directorate assembled in Naples, and set about fine-tuning plans to launch an attack on the capital.

As all this unfolded, looking on with growing concern was the tall, stalwart, fiercely anti-Fascist figure of Giovanni Amendola. At 40, Amendola was a year older than Mussolini, also a patriot and anti-Marxist. Like Mussolini, he hoped that Italians would rally behind a religion of the nation following its reunification in the previous century. But Amendola wanted this modernised state to be democratic and liberal, earnestly accepting the rule of law and a free press, and eschewing murder and corruption. Had events panned out differently, it is easy to imagine Amendola as a long-serving Italian prime minister.

So, on 27 October, fired by fear of a Fascist strike on Rome, Amendola – along with other leading figures in the government – attempted to impose a "state of siege" to repel Fascist squads that were assembling outside the capital. For the siege to hold, the government needed the support of the army and of King Victor Emmanuel III, who had been away on his estates shooting small birds. Both appeared to have been secured, and so placards proclaiming the intention to oppose a Fascist attack were pasted up around Rome.

Despite this, on that wet night of 27–28 October 1922, Giovanni Amendola's son Giorgio remembered being disturbed twice by the telephone – the latter call well after midnight. Then, suddenly, his father was called away to the Ministry of the Interior, where police activity was coordinated. Something was going wrong.

That something was the actions of the king and the prime minister. As the Fascists

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TIMELINE The rise of the Fascists

23 March 1919
At a rally at Milan's Piazza San Sepolcro, **Benito Mussolini** founds the Italian Fascist movement.

9 November 1921
The National Fascist Party – the political expression of the movement – is founded with Mussolini as its head.

28 October 1922
Mussolini's bid to seize power, the **March on Rome,** gets under way. By lunchtime, Fascist squads are pushing into the capital.

31 October 1922
King Victor Emmanuel III (below) formally appoints **Mussolini prime minister.**

16 November 1922
In his **first speech to the Chamber of Deputies**, Mussolini declares: "I could have shut down parliament and set up a government exclusively of Fascists. I could have. But, at least at this early stage, I have not wanted to."

14 January 1923
The king approves a law that, in practice, **converts Fascist squads into a Party Army** rivalling that of the nation.

Benito Mussolini in c1922, the year that witnessed his remarkable rise to power

Ready to strike
Fascist leaders pictured shortly before the March on Rome. Within a matter of days, Benito Mussolini (centre) would be the most powerful man in Italy

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had ratcheted up the pressure, these two men's will to resist had all but collapsed. Giovanni soon learned to his disgust that the state of siege was being revoked; Luigi Facta had resigned almost as soon as Victor Emmanuel had returned to Rome on the evening of the 27th. What's more, it soon became apparent that the army could hardly be relied upon to stand in the Fascists' way. Key military leaders advised the king that "the army will do its duty, but better not put it to the test".

By lunchtime on the 28th, young Giorgio watched as city workers began tearing down the proclamations. Later a few Fascists – who, over recent days, had been milling around in the countryside outside Rome – began to push through the streets of the city.

But where was Benito Mussolini? It soon became clear that the Duce (leader) had been a busy man. While his colleagues had been in Naples finalising the plan to march on Rome, Mussolini had retreated to his journalist's office in Milan in order to play hard ball with an increasingly panicky government.

> **In working-class zones around the city, Fascist squads assaulted and burned socialist meeting places**

Would Mussolini accept office under some Liberal, such as Antonio Salandra, who had taken Italy into the First World War in May 1915? No, came the response from the Milan telephone. By the morning of Sunday 29 October, it was evident that Mussolini was to become his country's youngest prime minister, despite the PNF only numbering 35 members in the Chamber of Deputies. That evening Mussolini took the express sleeper from Milan to the capital, framing his cabinet when on board. At 7.30pm on Monday 30th, he mounted the stairway of the Quirinale Palace to present his list to the king. His premiership dates from the next morning.

Socialists in strife

The Fascist squads were now the masters of Rome. In working-class zones around the city, they assaulted and burned socialist meeting places. Nineteen anti-Fascists died during these days of confusion and of Fascist battle cries about their *santi manganelli* (holy clubs) needing to be hammered down on their bestial Bolshevik enemies.

On 31 October, with Mussolini anxious to be seen to restore public order, Fascists in the city were disciplined into a triumphant march. Giorgio Amendola and a school friend went to watch. He remembered it as a "miserable spectacle", the Fascists by no means dressed in the same uniforms. They could not even remember the words of their anthem, *Giovinezza* (which had been a song of the crack Alpini corps and was not yet

4 March 1923
The upper bourgeois, monarchist, pro-clerical **Italian Nationalist Association** accepts "fusion" into the National Fascist Party.

6 April 1924
The "Big List", a coalition composed of Fascists and those willing to fellow-travel, wins a **vast majority in a general election.**

26 June 1924
Under the leadership of Giovanni Amendola, **at least 130 non-Fascists withdraw from parliament**. They are deprived of their seats on 9 November 1926.

3 January 1925
In a speech to the Chamber of Deputies, Mussolini says: "I, and I alone, assume political, moral and historical responsibility for all that has happened… When two sides fight and cannot compromise, force is the only solution." He therefore **announces his dictatorship**.

28 October 1925
Speaking at La Scala, Milan, Mussolini proclaims: "Our formula is this: 'All for the state, nothing outside the state, nothing and no one against the state.'" His dictatorship was therefore **pronouncing itself totalitarian**.

Fascist militia pledge allegiance to the army, 1924

Mussolini in Milan during celebrations to mark the third anniversary of the March on Rome

Change of face Mussolini (centre) at a National Fascist Party conference in 1925. He altered his position on everything from religion to women's rights

A helping hand

Victor Emmanuel III (left) greets Mussolini on 4 November 1922. The king's acquiescence had been critical to the Fascist seizure of power a few days earlier

properly updated to celebrate Mussolini). How disgraceful it was that the king, with Mussolini at his side, hailed these hoodlums from the balcony of the Quirinale Palace, the boys thought.

"Disgusted, we abandoned the big square and decided to finish our day at a brothel in the Via Capo le Case," wrote Giorgio. "We found it crowded because the 'black-shirts', in view of the festa, did not have to pay the fee. It was my first experience. The dark girl who dealt with me was especially gentle when she knew that I wasn't one of them: 'I've had to go with so many shits, I'm really pleased finally to have a clean boy,' she murmured."

Duke of the sea

The March on Rome had ended in triumph for the Fascists. Mussolini was now the most powerful man in Italy. Some historians are convinced that, from 28 October 1922, there was "at once the regime": that the brutal autocracy that cast a long shadow over European geopolitics in the 1920s and 30s arrived fully formed.

But, actually, it wasn't until January 1925, following much nudging by irritated "revolutionaries" among the squads, that the Duce declared himself dictator in a speech to Italy's Chamber of Deputies. In the intervening two years, Mussolini was the head of a coalition government. Among its membership, the most telling figures were the minister of war, Armando Diaz, and the aristocratic Piedmontese minister of the navy, Paolo Thaon di Revel (who the king had given the remarkable title of "Duke of the Sea"). They were proof indeed that Italy's officer corps were soft on Fascism. Mussolini's colleagues also numbered Catholics and liberals, as well the internationally celebrated philosopher Giovanni Gentile, who became minister of education.

In our own times, fascism is always viewed as virulently anti-liberal, the enemy of every aspect of liberal democracy, be it the rule of law, parliamentarism, the market and opinion free from state interference, individual property ownership and peaceful dealings between nations. In 1922, this destiny was not necessarily clear. Then, even Giovanni Amendola, the most rigorous of his country's new-generation liberals, thought that the regime ought to be allowed to get on with governing, at least for the next months. Maybe the violence of its arrival in power would be curbed in office. As early as 8 November, Mussolini demanded that "Sunday riots" in the provinces cease, blaming them on "nasty local partisan passions", thereby seeming to dismiss the ideological thrust of squadrism.

After all, in the months before 28 October, Mussolini and his followers had changed many ideas that they had announced during the formation of the Fascist movement on 23 March 1919. From avowed Republicans, they had turned monarchist. From critics of the Vatican, the Fascists switched to defend religion. From a modish feminism, at least among some enthusiastic revolutionaries, the PNF became sternly patriarchal; Fascist "revolution" never did much to interfere with the traditional structures of the Italian family.

In 1919, Mussolini, the socialist converted by war to the nation, talked about imposing swingeing taxes on war profiteers, targeting such industrialists as Giovanni Agnelli of Fiat, the Pirelli and Olivetti families. In time, such radicalism diffused into a "third way" for society, which the regime called Corporatism. Altering social geography from the Marxist horizontal, where the working class was destined to oust the bourgeoisie that presently stood above it, corporatism promised a vertically arranged society where everyone employed in heavy industry or education, for example, was united in their work's cause. Each corporation was linked to others, bonding a fully united nation.

No room for dissent

So, in the immediate aftermath of the March on Rome, Mussolini's Fascist regime was characterised by shapeshifting and compromise. There was at least a degree of uncertainty about the new prime minister's next moves. Yet, over the following three years, any hopes that these moves would nudge the regime in a liberal direction, one that would accommodate dissenting views, were to be well and truly dispelled.

A sign that the Duce was tightening his grip on Italy's institutions arrived on 14 January 1923, when King Victor Emmanuel approved a law in practice converting Fascist

Any hopes that the regime would nudge in a liberal direction were well and truly dispelled

BRIDGEMAN/AKG-IMAGES

How did Mussolini inspire the Nazis?
RJB Bosworth answered the big questions on the rise of Fascism in a recent episode of our podcast. Listen here: *historyextra.com/fascism-podcast*

Street fighters
Fascist squadristas in Milan, 1922. On becoming prime minister, Mussolini distanced himself – in public, at least – from the violence of the Blackshirts

Making a stand
Giovanni Amendola – shown giving a speech in 1924 – was a vociferous critic of Mussolini's Fascists. It was a stance that would cost him his life

AKG-IMAGES/ARCHIVIO AMENDOLA

Amendola was beaten savagely by Fascist hitmen in rural Tuscany. He would die from his injuries

squads into a party-army rivalling that of the nation.

Then, on 10 June 1924, just two months after securing a resounding victory in the general election (securing 374 seats out of 535 in the Chamber of Deputies), Mussolini's squadrists kidnapped and murdered the rich, moderate and outspokenly anti-Fascist socialist, Giacomo Matteotti.

In protest at the killing, at least 130 non-Fascists, under the leadership of Giovanni Amendola, withdrew from parliament. Italy was now well on its way to becoming a one-party state. When, on 28 October 1925, Mussolini delivered a speech at La Scala, Milan in which he declared: "Our formula is this: 'All for the state, nothing outside the state, nothing and no one against the state'", he was merely confirming what many had already begun to suspect: that Italy had become a totalitarian dictatorship.

Giovanni Amendola would feel the full force of the dictator's growing appetite for violence. First, he was publicly attacked by Fascist hitmen in central Rome in December 1923. Then, on 20 July 1925, he was beaten even more savagely in rural Tuscany. He would die from his injuries in 1926.

The March on Rome in October 1922 had triggered a chain of events that propelled Italy towards dictatorship and totalitarianism – a transformation that would have enormous ramifications for global politics. In those early years, Giovanni Amendola had refused to back down, positioning himself as one of Mussolini's most ferocious and high-profile critics. And for that he paid the ultimate price. H

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RJB Bosworth is an emeritus fellow at Jesus College, Oxford and one of the world's leading experts on Fascist Italy

Margaret Macmillan nominated Mussolini for an episode of BBC Radio 4's **Great Lives.**
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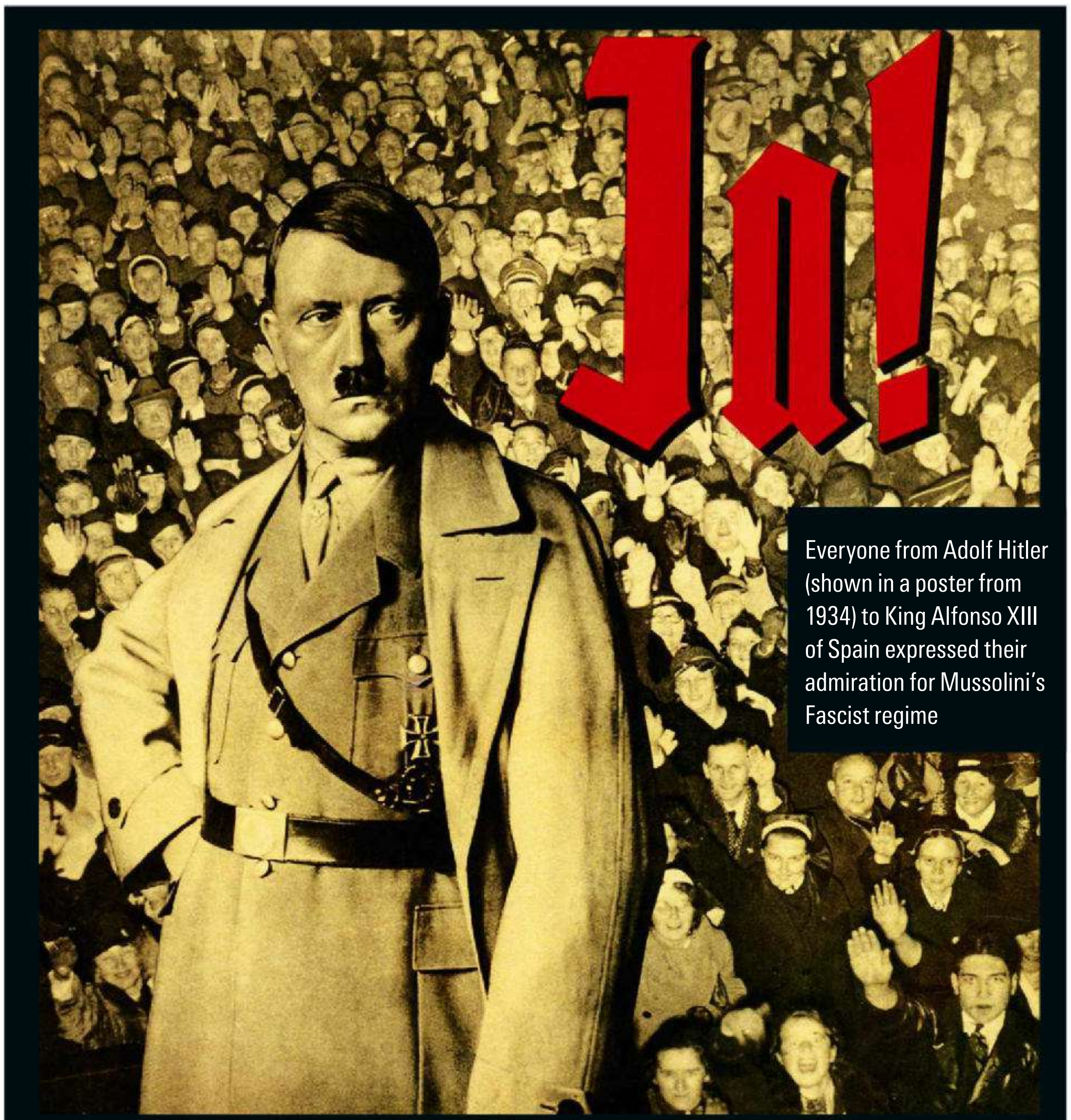

Everyone from Adolf Hitler (shown in a poster from 1934) to King Alfonso XIII of Spain expressed their admiration for Mussolini's Fascist regime

FASCISM'S GLOBAL ALLURE

How events in Italy energised Europe's far right in the 1920s

The ghost that hovers in the background of any discussion of Italian Fascism's impact on global politics is always Adolf Hitler. War and genocide are automatically assumed to be the hallmarks of Fascism. Indeed, in October 1922, Hitler, an unusual German rightist in admiring Italy, country of artistic glory, watched events in Rome. When, a year later, he tried to seize power in his Beer Hall putsch, he invoked an Italian model and was delighted when fans called him the "German Mussolini". According to the historian Ian Kershaw, throughout the next decade, Hitler's workroom in the Brown House at Munich was "adorned with a monumental bust" of the Duce.

Across Europe, Mussolini had plenty of other admirers. When, on 13 September 1923, the aristocratic General Miguel Primo de Rivera mounted a military coup in Spain, claiming he was ending parliamentary corruption and muddle, King Alfonso XIII hailed him as "my Mussolini". Then and later, plenty of rightists praised the Duce, a number eventually winning subsidies from Rome. Even in the mid-1930s, Italian Fascists could wonder whether Roosevelt's New Deal was Mussolinian in inspiration.

Young Italian Fascists flirted with adding Stalin to their list of Mussolini imitators, while Kemal Atatürk (who in 1923 became the Republic of Turkey's first president) was another deemed to be making a nation on his model. Atatürk disdained such parallel and, despite his regime's having a domestic death toll vastly higher than Mussolini's until Italy entered the Second World War, far more non-Italian historians are willing to praise him than endorse the Fascist dictatorship.

In our own times, Fascism is a word of ubiquitous usage and unclear meaning, except that it is a label most people pin on those they dislike and oppose. So Donald Trump, a billionaire proponent of the market, a lifetime enemy of state "regulation", is often deemed to be one, despite scarcely wanting to endorse the Italian formula of 1925 that nothing and no one is against the state.

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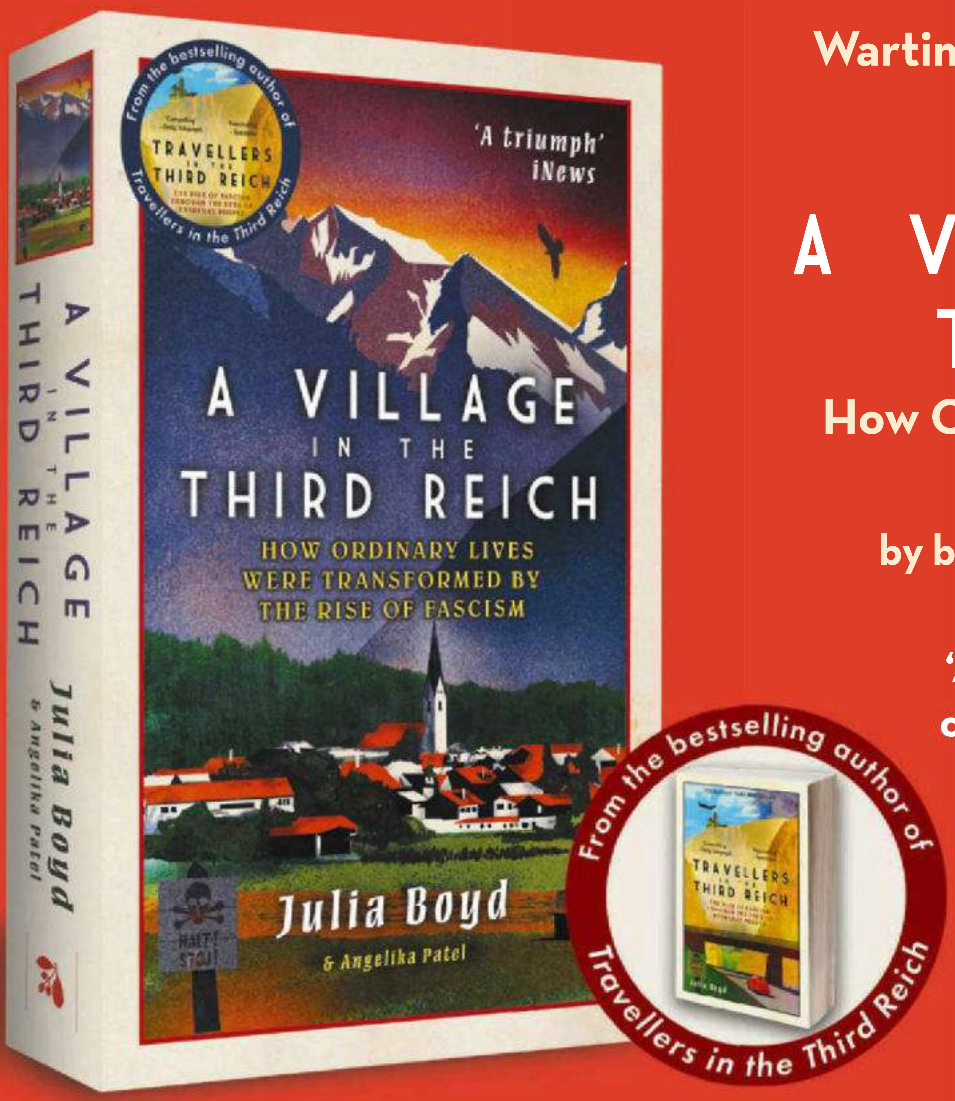

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QUEENS OF BLING

When Henry VIII's wives sought to project messages about themselves to the watching world, they often did so via jewellery. Using six portraits, **Nicola Tallis** reveals how the consorts' choice of pendants, rubies and brooches shaped their public images

TUDOR JEWELS-ETSY/JENNIFER LAMB-THE ENCHANTED TUDOR ROSE

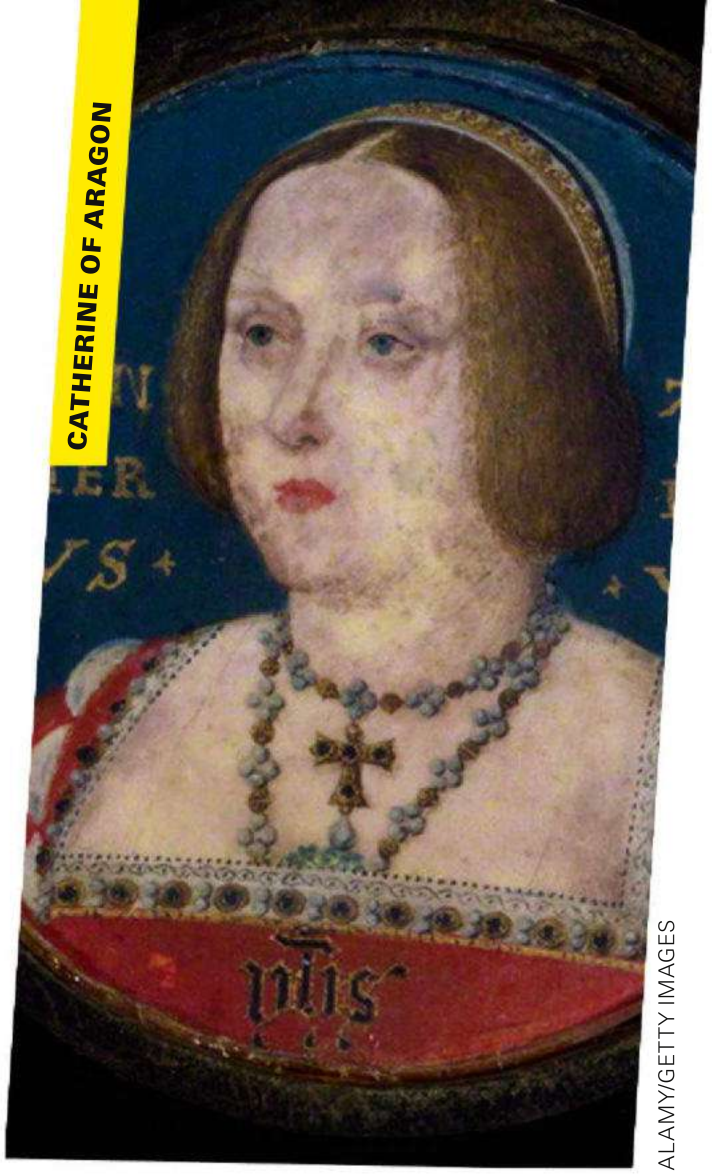
1 SYMBOLS OF SALVATION

Catherine of Aragon's choice of necklace and brooch enabled her to make a very public display of her piety

The jewels worn by Henry VIII's first wife not only say a great deal about her status but, more significantly, her character and values. In keeping with the fashion for low-cut gowns, Catherine's is lined with pearls and diamonds set in goldsmith's work. But it is her necklace and brooch – shown in this c1525 painting by Lucas Horenbout – that draw the most interest. Attached to the necklace of gold beads and clusters of pearls is an ornate tau cross – a T-shaped cross symbolic of salvation. Interestingly, Catherine's daughter, Mary, was later painted wearing a similar cross, as were Jane Seymour and Katherine Parr, reflecting each queen's piety.

Queens were expected to be pious, but Catherine's faith was personal too. Her jewels reflect a genuine and heartfelt devotion to God, and the tau cross was also associated with her favourite religious order, the Observant Franciscans. Her commitment to the Franciscans was reinforced by her choice of the IHS brooch pinned to her chest (IHS is an abbreviation of the Greek word for Jesus). IHS had been employed as a peace symbol since the 15th century, and by Catherine's time, it had become an integral marker of Catholic identity.

Catherine of Aragon is well known for being a principled woman with a strong religious faith. Her choices of jewellery reinforced this image by providing a platform from which she could make her piety public – and enduring.



CATHERINE OF ARAGON

ALAMY/GETTY IMAGES

2 THE A TO B OF STYLE

Anne Boleyn used jewellery to cultivate the image of a fiercely independent woman at the cutting edge of fashion

This image of Anne Boleyn has etched its way into popular memory. Five centuries after it was painted, it remains a source of fascination – and that fascination is largely the product of her jewels, most specifically the gold "B" pendant hanging from her neck.

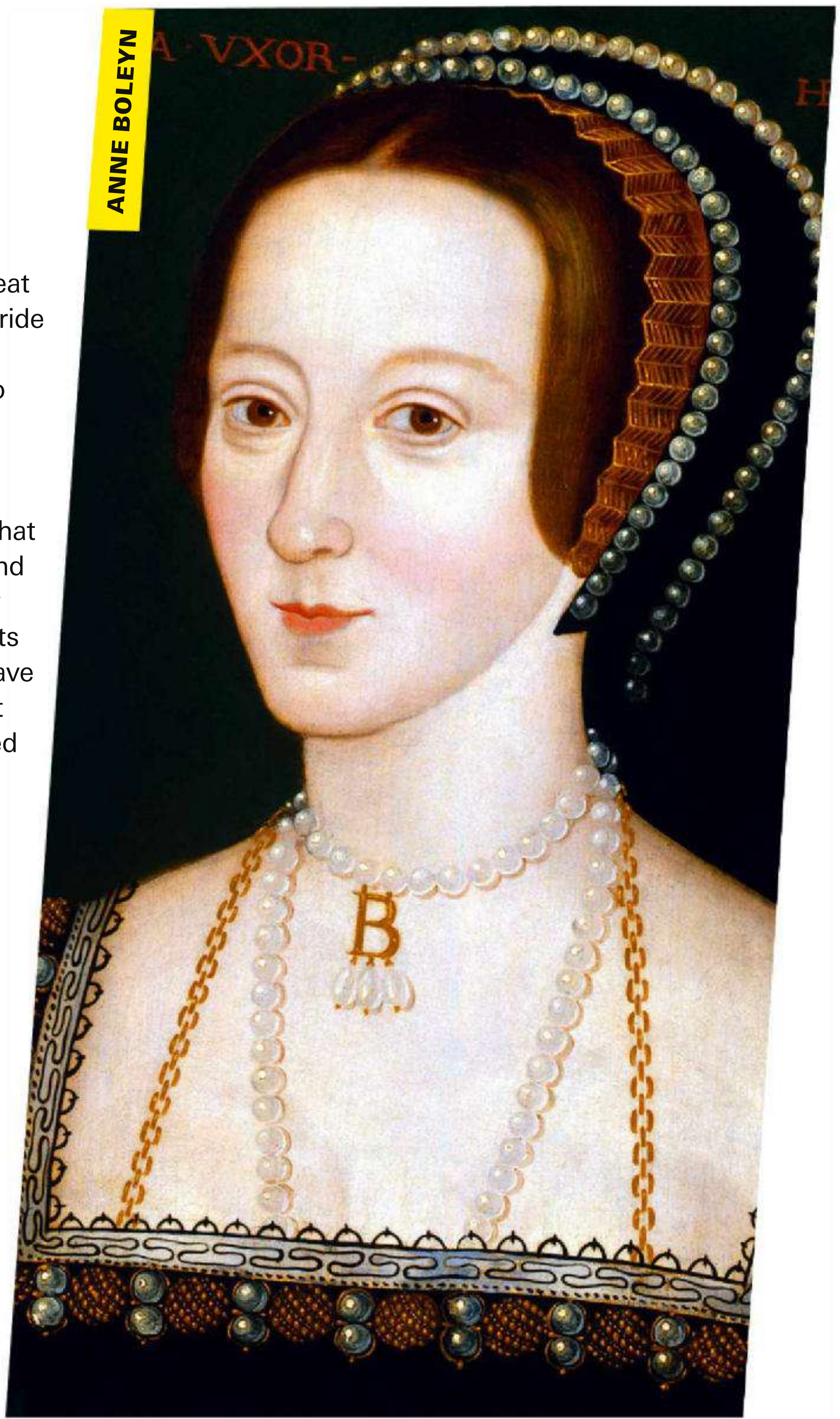
Anne acquired a reputation for great style and sophistication among her contemporaries, so it's tempting to imagine that the trend for wearing jewels bearing initials originated with her. This was, however, a fashion that had begun long before, spreading through Europe during the late 14th century.

Margaret of Austria, regent of the Netherlands, was extremely fond of initial jewels. Given that Anne had spent a small amount of time at Margaret's cosmopolitan court in Mechelen in her youth, it is feasible that she was influenced by the trend there.

Anne was fascinated by fashion, so it is unsurprising that she set and expressed the latest trends through her choice of jewellery. She was certainly enthusiastic about initial pieces, for in addition to her "B" pendant she owned an "AB" and an "A", which her daughter, Elizabeth, can be seen wearing in a portrait. Anne also had a ring which displayed her motto: "The most happy."

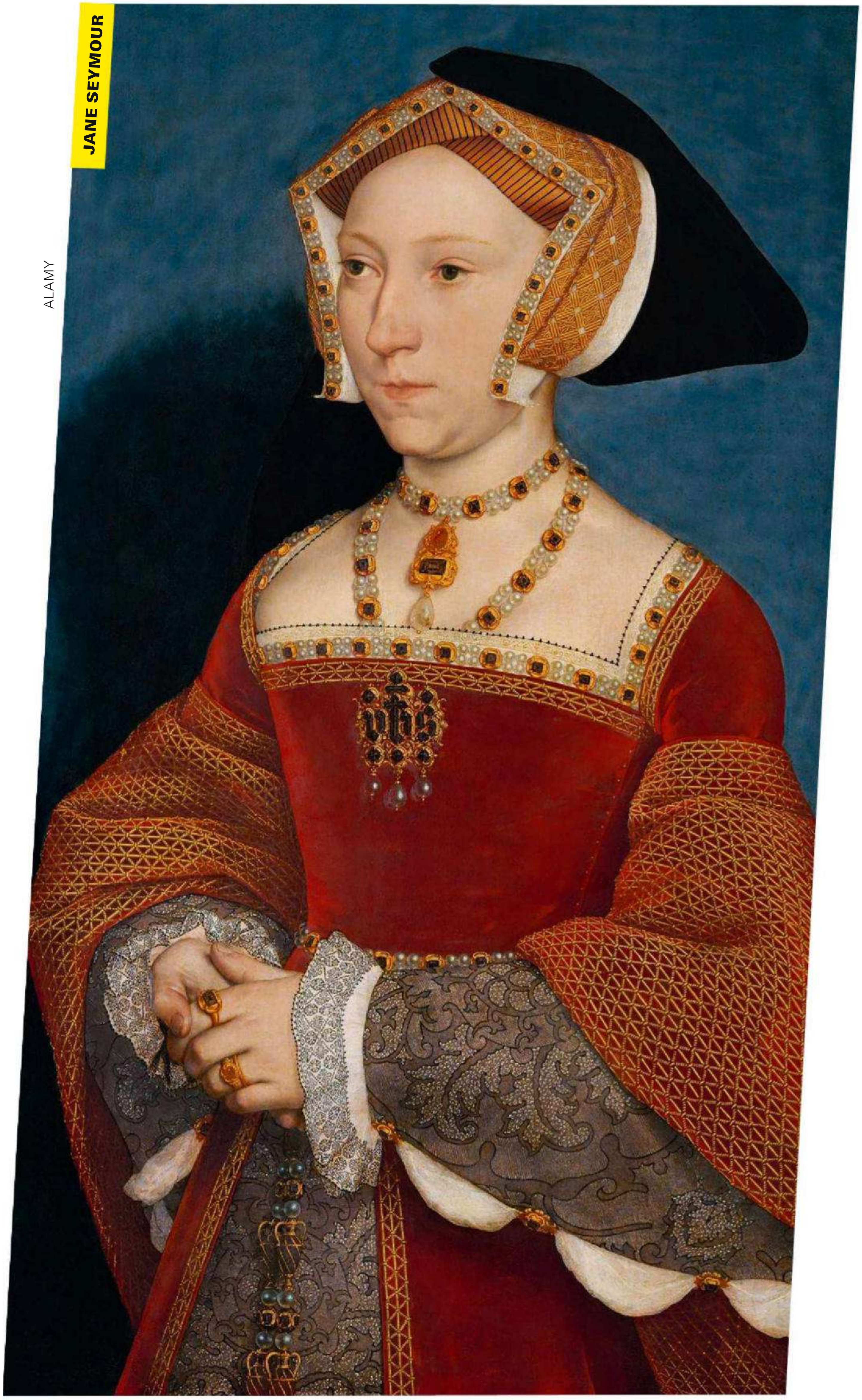
Such jewels provided a neat way of showcasing Anne's pride in her Boleyn roots and her individuality, and at least two of her successors, Catherine Howard and Katherine Parr, owned similar items.

Initial jewellery is a style that has retained its popularity, and Anne's image is immediately conjured when considering its history. The trend may not have begun or ended with her, but she has doubtless contributed to the fascination and is certainly worthy of the title of fashionista.



ANNE BOLEYN

Which of Henry's wives spent the most on jewellery? To find out, listen to our podcast with Nicola Tallis at: *historyextra.com/podcast*



ALAMY

3 THE POWER AND THE GLORY

Jane Seymour seemingly had only one objective in mind when sitting for Hans Holbein: projecting her magnificence

The imperial ambassador Eustace Chapuys described her as "no great beauty". But what Jane Seymour may have lacked in looks she certainly made up for in jewels. In her portrait by the great master Hans Holbein, Jane is adorned in some of the most splendid pieces from the queen's jewel collection. It is possible that some were inherited from her predecessors, and certainly, many of Jane's items later came into the possession of Catherine Howard and Katherine Parr.

Painted in exquisite detail, the rich pearls and diamonds studded in gold that adorn Jane's headdress – known as a habillement – form a matching set with those around her neck, waist and the border of her dress, known as a square.

Jane's inventory lists numerous jewelled buttons, so it is unsurprising that the sleeves of her gown show some of the practical jewels that pinned them together. She also owned more than 50 pairs of beads, and several descriptions match those that hang from her waist that were elaborately decorated, probably with enamel.

Jane's most impressive jewel, however, is the spectacular ouche – a pendant set with jewels – that is suspended from her necklace. Catherine Howard also wore this while sitting for her portrait (on page 34), revealing not just a link between the two queens but also that this was a high value piece that made a statement of splendour. Jane's portrait reveals a queen consort who clearly wanted to impress with her magnificence.

4 FOREIGN BODY

Anne of Cleves' jewellery highlights her determination to carve out her own identity in a new home

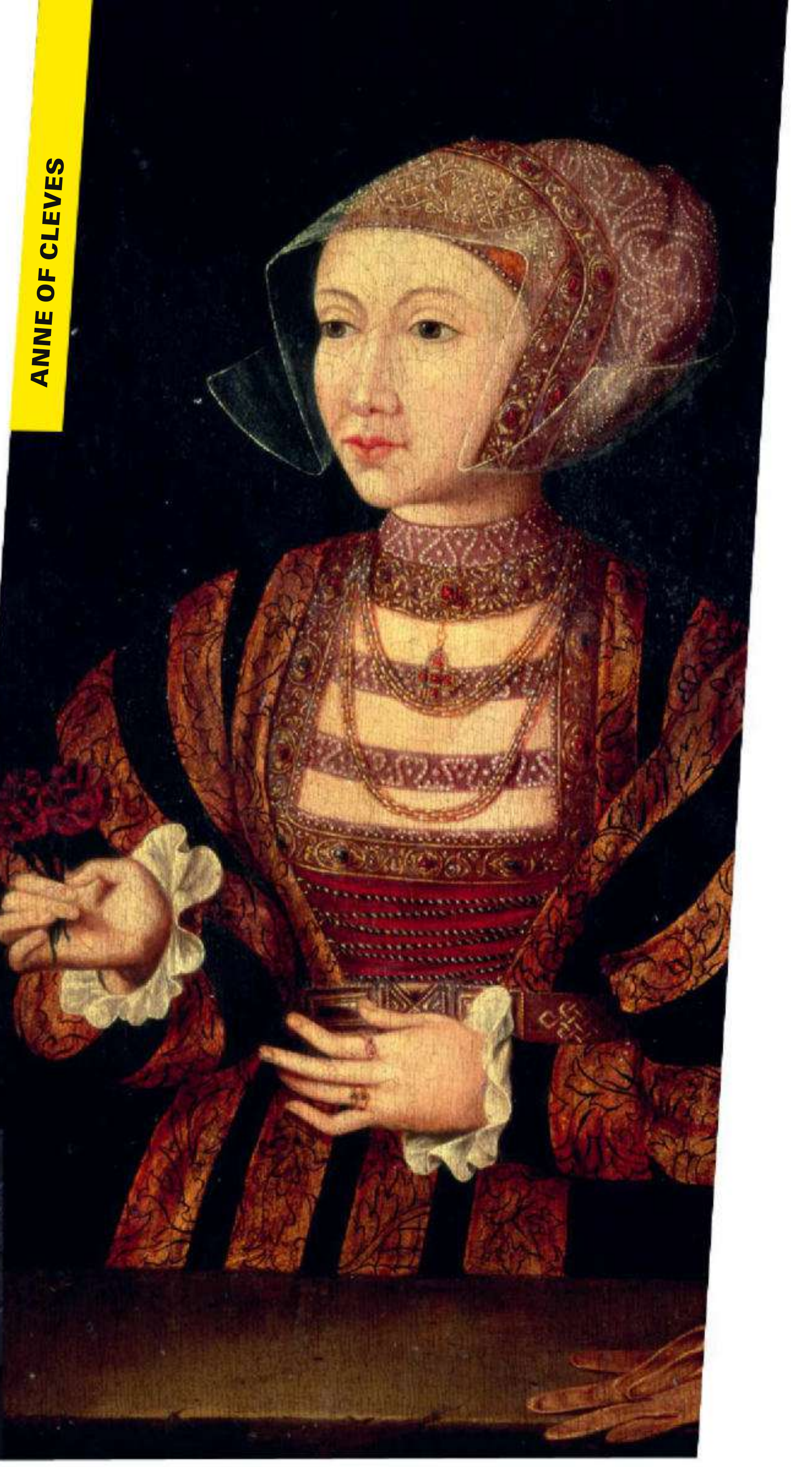
Anne of Cleves' marriage may only have lasted for six months in 1540, but she was determined to make the most of queenship – and the material trappings that came with it. This contemporary portrait shows her dressed in the style popular in the Duchy of Cleves: pearls adorning both her costume and her jewelled coif (a close-fitting cap). Yet the jewels that she bought on becoming Henry VIII's fourth wife paint a more impressive picture.

As a foreign queen (born in Dusseldorf) yet to make friends and allies in her new country, jewels were glamorous tools that allowed Anne to carve out her own identity.

By spending more than £400 in a matter of months – an exorbitant sum – Anne recognised the value of splendour when it came to fashioning a role for herself at Henry's court. Her jewels came from several goldsmiths employed by the other wives as well as the king, and her purchases included diamonds, a gold chain and rings that were perhaps similar to those worn in her portrait.

There was also a brooch "garnished with diamonds", which told the story of Samson (and, as such, could be viewed as a sign of strength, or even romantic betrayal). A similar piece later appeared in Henry VIII's inventory: could it have been the same?

Perhaps most importantly, money was outlaid for "the engraving and making of the queen's grace's great seal", a sign that Anne took her duties seriously. Her jewels served to boost not only her confidence but also her status.



Anne of Cleves recognised the value of splendour, as her necklaces (replicas of which are shown below) demonstrate

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5 OBJECTS OF DESIRE

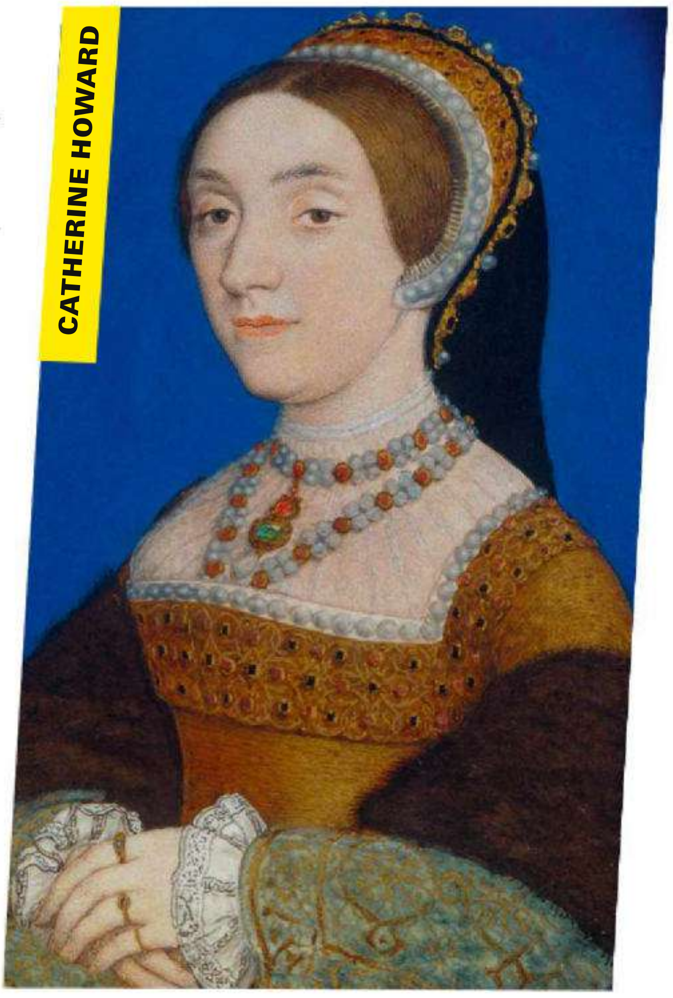
Henry VIII's passion for the young Catherine Howard manifested itself in an extraordinary collection of luxurious dresses and jewels

When Henry married Catherine in the summer of 1540 at Oatlands Palace, he was infatuated with his new, young bride. So enamoured was Henry that he showered Catherine with gifts of jewels in tangible signs of his love and affection.

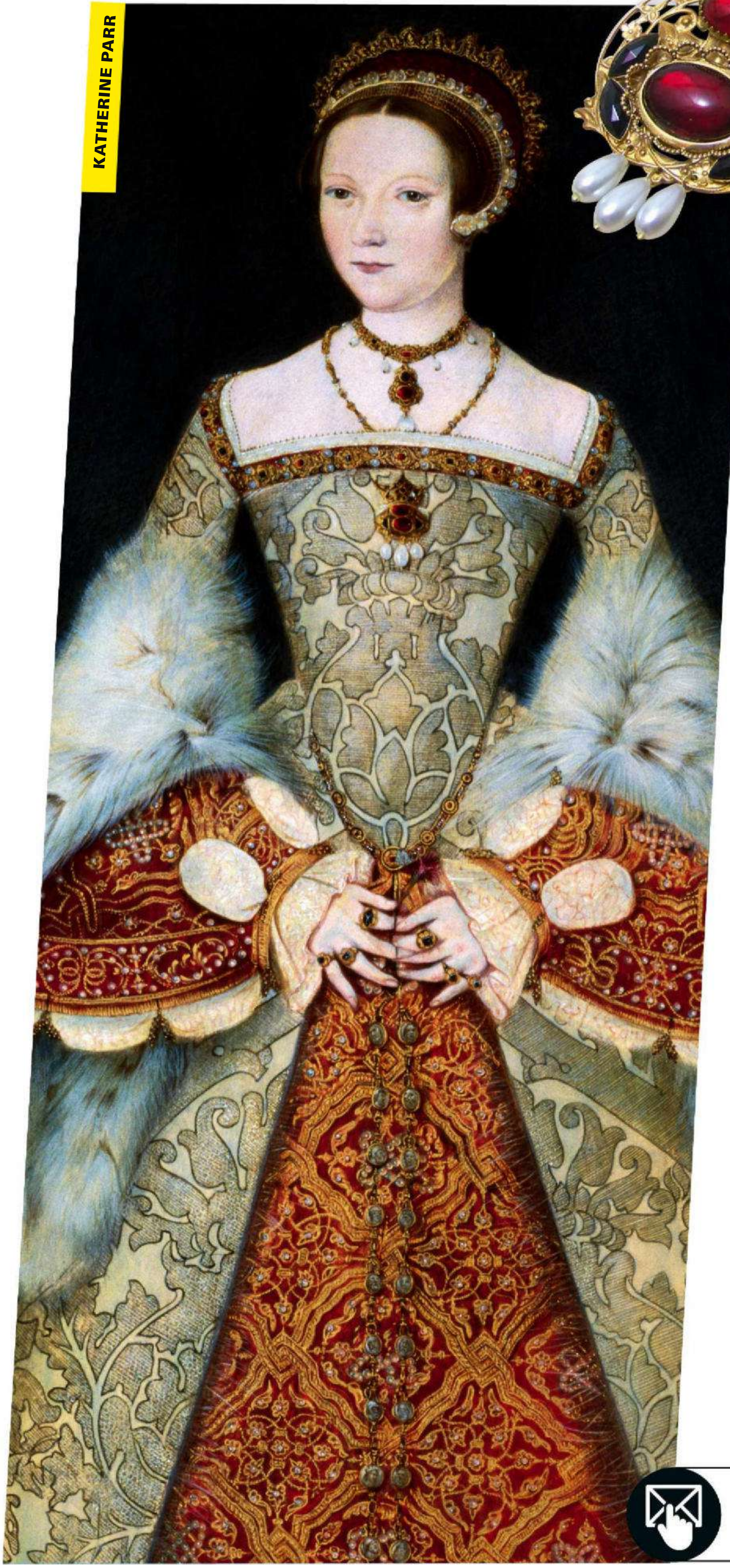
A number of these were given "at the time of the solemnisation of their marriage", but there were many more to follow. At new year 1541, Henry gave his wife eight pieces of jewellery. In a gesture of kindness, Catherine then presented a ring (which Henry had given her) to her predecessor, Anne of Cleves.

Catherine's opulent jewels are reflected in Holbein's miniature, which is widely thought to depict Henry's fifth wife. One of the strongest clues of the sitter's identity comes from her jewels; an inventory compiled at the time of Catherine's fall and execution (1541–42) lists 175 items, many of which had probably been owned by Henry's previous queens. It includes the same diamond and ruby ouche that was worn by Jane Seymour.

Similar rings to those worn in the miniature also appear in the inventory, and the same is true of the jewels attached to Catherine's rich hood. These pieces were so valuable that it is easy to understand why a contemporary chronicler believed that "the king had no wife who made him spend so much money in dresses and jewels as she did".



BRIDGEMAN/ ALAMY/ANGELA-TREASURES FOR A QUEEN-ETSY



LEFT: **A modern recreation of Katherine Parr's crown brooch, a dazzling symbol of her fascination with royalty**

6 ROYAL SEAL OF APPROVAL

Katherine Parr's sumptuous costume speaks to her fierce pride in her status as Henry's queen

Almost certainly painted to mark Katherine's regency in the summer of 1544, Master John's likeness of Henry VIII's fashion-conscious sixth queen displays some of Katherine's costliest jewels. The beads suspended from her waist are decorated with antique faces in keeping with the latest trends, while a dazzling ouche is attached to her beautiful necklace. This was perhaps a favourite, given that Katherine wore it while sitting for another portrait.

One of Katherine's jewels is particularly striking, for it exemplifies the common theme in her collection: grandeur. Pinned to her dress is an opulent crown brooch, which may have been commissioned on the queen's orders. Hailing as she did from a non-royal background, throughout her reign Katherine did her utmost to project an image of majesty, and her jewels provided her with rich tools that enabled her to do so. Several pieces in her collection reflected her interest in royalty, including a brooch featuring her image and that of her royal husband. This symbolised loyalty to Henry VIII.

Katherine's iconic crown brooch passed into the hands of Henry's daughter Mary I, and it was later owned by both Queen Elizabeth I – who learned much about fashioning a royal image from Katherine – and Anne of Denmark (wife of King James VI & I), on whose orders it was broken down.

Dripping in jewels, Katherine's portrait is undoubtedly one of the most powerful images of a queen consort, and one in which, as intended, she exudes majesty. H

Nicola Tallis is an author and historian. Her latest book, *All the Queen's Jewels, 1445–1548: Power, Majesty and Display*, is published by Routledge in November

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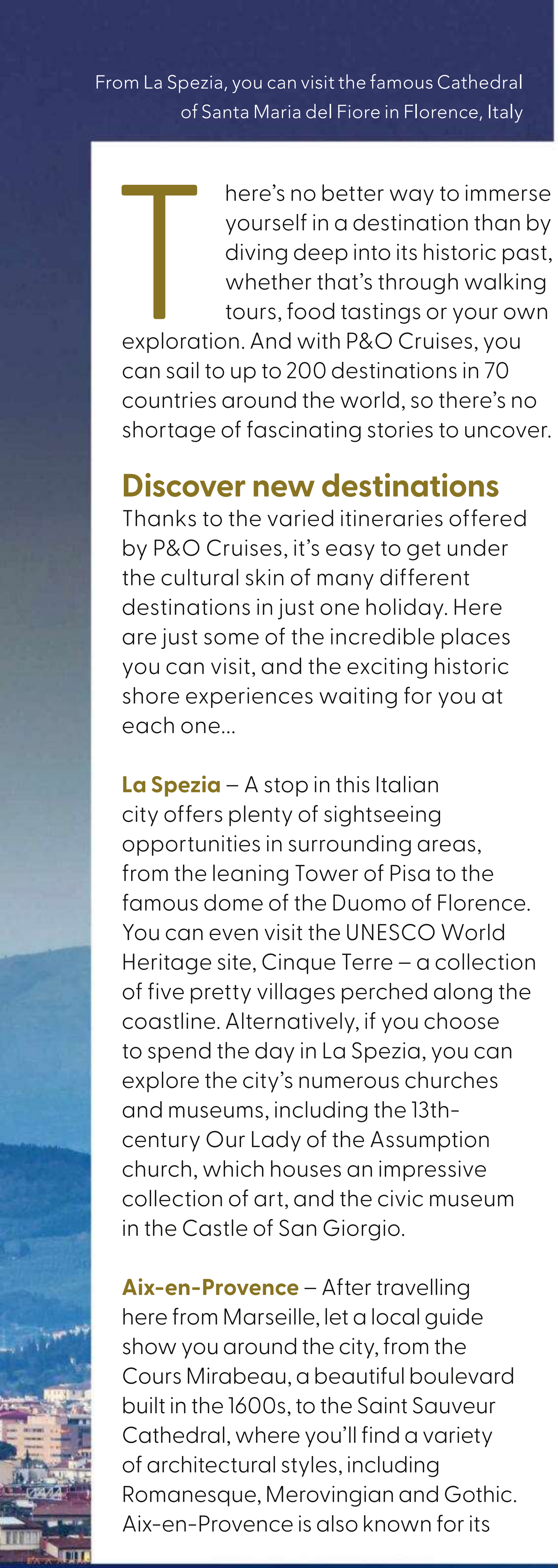
From La Spezia, you can visit the famous Cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore in Florence, Italy

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La Spezia – A stop in this Italian city offers plenty of sightseeing opportunities in surrounding areas, from the leaning Tower of Pisa to the famous dome of the Duomo of Florence. You can even visit the UNESCO World Heritage site, Cinque Terre – a collection of five pretty villages perched along the coastline. Alternatively, if you choose to spend the day in La Spezia, you can explore the city's numerous churches and museums, including the 13th-century Our Lady of the Assumption church, which houses an impressive collection of art, and the civic museum in the Castle of San Giorgio.

Aix-en-Provence – After travelling here from Marseille, let a local guide show you around the city, from the Cours Mirabeau, a beautiful boulevard built in the 1600s, to the Saint Sauveur Cathedral, where you'll find a variety of architectural styles, including Romanesque, Merovingian and Gothic. Aix-en-Provence is also known for its fountains, so look out for the thermal Mousse Fountain, which dates back to Roman times, and the 19th-century one depicting Good King René of Anjou. After the tour, why not head to a local shop for a relaxed cheese and wine tasting?

Valencia – Visit Carcaixent on the Orange Blossom Coast to discover how the region's orange farming has evolved through the ages. You'll explore the atmospheric Magatzem de Ribera warehouse, where the fruit was stored and handled in huge quantities during the 19th century. Plus, you'll visit an orchard with ancient trees and have the chance to taste the produce in various forms, from orange liqueur to tangy marmalade.

Haugesund – From Haugesund, you can visit the idyllic harbour town of Skudeneshavn. Here, you'll find painted wooden houses that date back to the 19th century, and you can also get a glimpse into local life at the Skudeneshavn Museum. Later, head to the Tidens Minde brewery and step through a floor hatch into an atmospheric basement where beer has been served since 1857. In the intimate serving room, you can sample beer from the Skudenes Brewery, as well as other intriguing Norwegian varieties.

St Kitts – Step aboard the St Kitts Railway to experience one of the most stunning train rides in the world. The narrow-gauge railroad was built almost a century ago to deliver sugar cane to the capital city of Basseterre – today, it provides visitors with a unique way to tour the island. The railcars feature an upper, open-air observation deck, so you can enjoy panoramic views of the surrounding countryside.

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The memorable experiences don't just lie ashore either. On Food Hero cruises you can indulge your culinary passions and watch live cooking demos from household names, including legendary chefs Marco Pierre White and Kjartan Skjelde. You'll also have an impressive range of restaurants and bars to choose from, as well as captivating evening entertainment at Iona's SkyDome, where guests can enjoy musical performances and jaw-dropping acrobatic displays by the world-renowned production company Creativiva.

The Plaza de la Almoina in Valencia, Spain, one of Iona's stunning historic destinations

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“She was in the world of change but somehow apart from it”

Throughout her reign, Queen Elizabeth II remained a constant presence in an era of vast social, technological and geopolitical transformation. **Anna Whitelock** charts an era in which Britain, but not its queen, changed beyond recognition

Flying the flags
The Queen enjoys a rapturous welcome from the children of Truro during a visit to the Cornish capital in 1956. Across the following 66 years, her constancy "belied the epochal shift experienced by her country", writes Anna Whitelock

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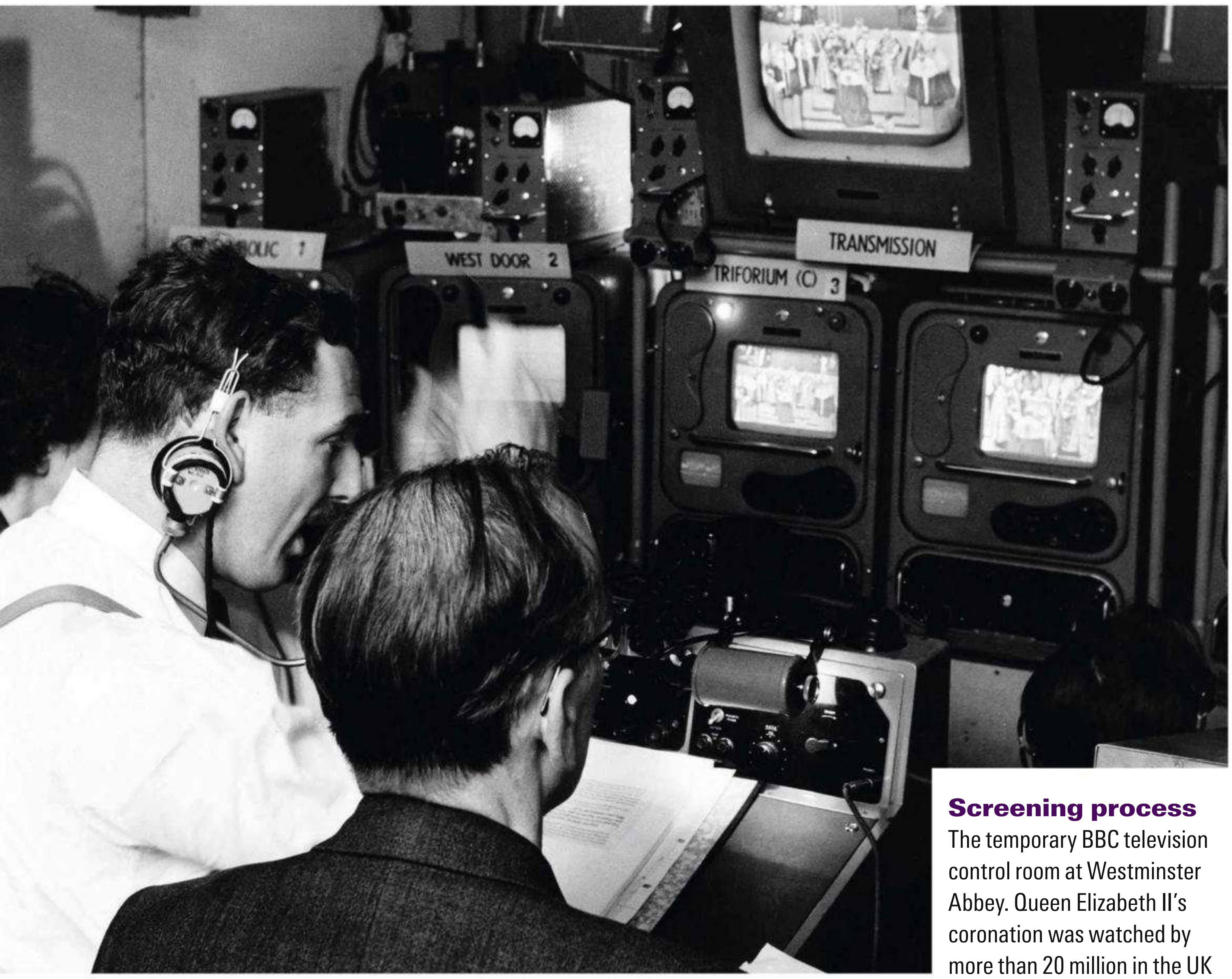

Screening process
The temporary BBC television control room at Westminster Abbey. Queen Elizabeth II's coronation was watched by more than 20 million in the UK

Never before has Britain changed so dramatically during the reign of one monarch. The second Elizabethan age was defined by unprecedented transformations in every facet of life, the effects of which rivalled those of the industrial revolution more than two centuries earlier. Queen Elizabeth II witnessed significant changes in society, technology, transport and geopolitics, which created what most people would recognise today as the modern British state. The very fact that the monarchy has survived and, indeed, thrived against this backdrop owes much to the late Queen and her constant, unchanging presence over 70 years.

Before the Queen's coronation on 2 June 1953, few people owned a television. The decision to broadcast the ceremony live prompted many to buy their first set, and well over 20 million people in the UK watched Queen Elizabeth II being crowned at Westminster Abbey in London. The BBC, then the only national broadcaster, transmitted on just one (black-and-white) television channel and three radio stations. It approached the coronation filming with reverence and deference. The director general's views were clear: "There ought to be an absolutely rigid policy that so far as the BBC is concerned [the royal family] can be guaranteed complete privacy."

Over the following 69 years, the media changed beyond recognition. Countless terrestrial television channels are now available, plus many more via streaming subscriptions. At the same time, the media industry has become global, with rolling 24-hour news channels, newspapers viewed online, and social media posts visible almost anywhere on the globe. Much of this was made possible by the world wide web, just one key innovation in an age marked by rapid changes in communication. At the start of the Queen's reign, communication was primarily via letters, telegrams and newspapers. Just two and a half decades later, in 1976, she sent her first email; she uploaded her first YouTube video in 2008, sent her first tweet in 2014, and uploaded her first Instagram post in 2019. By 2022, print newspapers reached just 24 per cent of the British public, down from 40 per cent just four years previously. Also by 2022, Instagram, TikTok and YouTube had all overtaken the BBC as the prime source of news for British teenagers.

Appliances of science

It's not just in the realm of computer science that Britain has witnessed immense technological change over the past 70 years. In 1952, when Elizabeth came to the throne, only a small minority of homes had central heating, fridges, washing machines or telephones. There were just 2.5 million cars on the roads, and for most people owning such a vehicle was a distant aspiration. Today, most households own at least one car – there are 32.9 million on the roads.

The young Queen ruled over a less-populous, younger country. Of the UK's 50.6 million people in 1953, 21.6 million were under the age of 30, and 8 million were 60 or older – a ratio of 2.7 to 1. The population has since grown to more than 68 million and also aged. The ratio of young to old is 1.4 to 1 and falling. This ageing society is another feature of the second Elizabethan age that increasingly

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Leaping forward
Children play in a north London junior school in 1971. Britain has evolved into a multi-faith and multi-ethnic society over the past seven decades

SCIENCE MUS

Social media debut
Queen Elizabeth II sends her first tweet in 2014: "It is a pleasure to open the Information Age exhibition today at the Science Museum and I hope people will enjoy visiting. Elizabeth R"

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puts pressure on the celebrated National Health Service (NHS) – which was just four years old in 1952.

Part of the explanation for the rise in life expectancy in the UK has been local scientific excellence. The discovery of the double helix structure of DNA in 1953 by James Watson, Francis Crick and Rosalind Franklin, together with Robert Edwards' IVF (in vitro fertilisation) revolution, which lead to the birth of the first "test-tube baby" in 1978, played their part in changing the face of science, medicine, education and preventative treatments. The importance of these advances will never be forgotten, and these individuals proved themselves pioneers comparable to the great explorers and inventors of the Victorian period.

UK society has also become vastly more diverse year on year since 1952, when few Britons would have seen a non-white face in their daily life. Over the past seven decades, immigration has created a multi-faith and multi-ethnic society, and "Britishness" has declined concurrently as the default national identity. The instinctive, 1950s sense of British nationhood – forged through two world wars, a Protestant faith and an imperial project that elided any sense of internal UK differentiation – has come to an end. Now identities are more fragmented or multiple: many people in the UK consider themselves primarily Scottish, Welsh, English or even European.

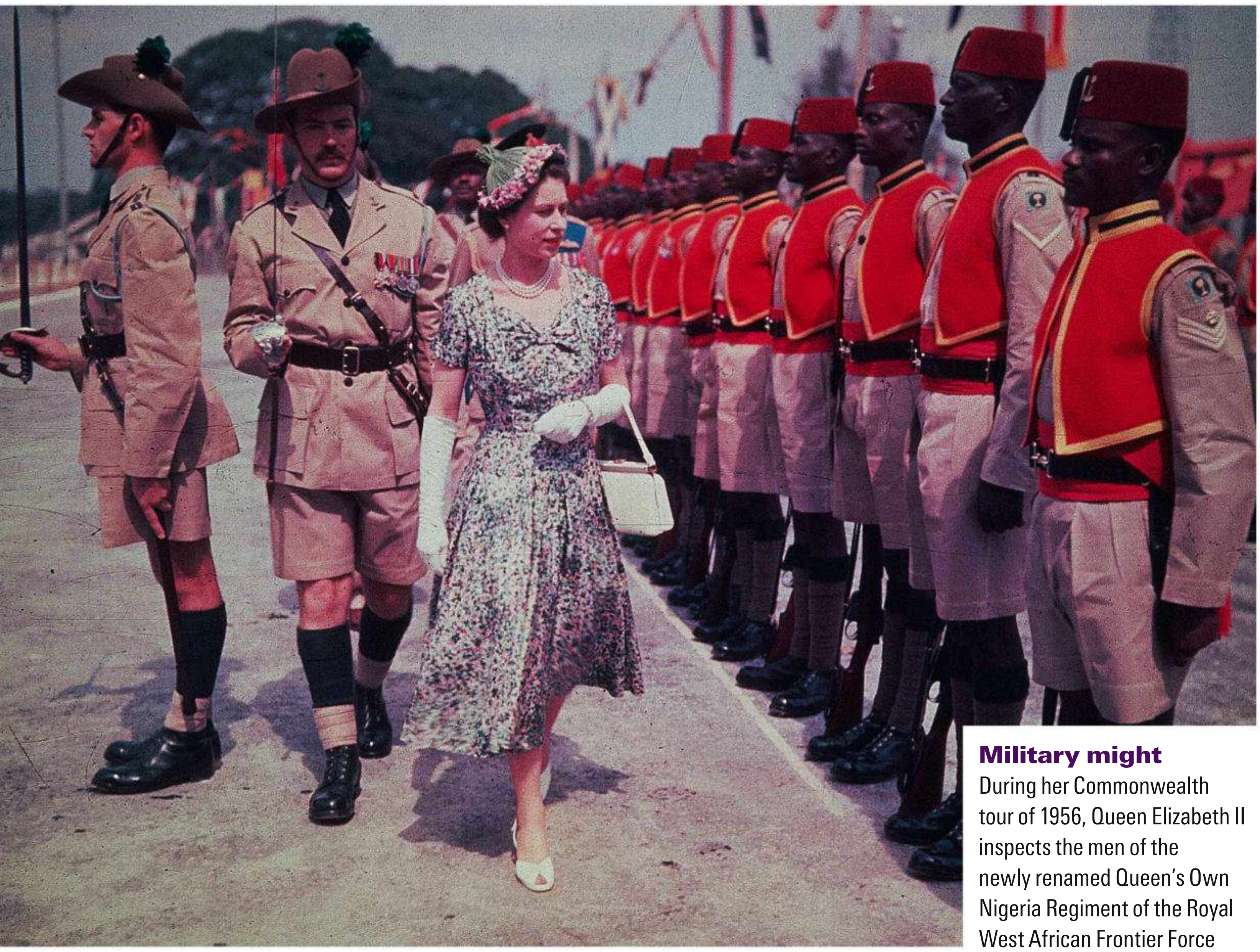
The fact that London has a Muslim mayor, Sadiq Khan, and that the current cabinet – with its majority of women and individuals from ethnic minority backgrounds – is indicative of the scale of change. None of this was a possibility in 1952. Then, women comprised just 32 per cent of the employed population. Today, they make up 48 per cent of the workforce.

The Queen joined that workforce herself during the Second World War when employed as a truck mechanic in the Women's Auxiliary Territorial Service. More than 70 years later, in 2015, she noted the great strides that women have taken over the course of her reign during a speech to mark the centenary of the Women's Institute. "In the modern world, the opportunities for women to give something of value to society are greater than ever, because, through their own efforts, they now play a much greater part in all areas of public life," she observed.

> The new Elizabethan age produced brilliant scientists comparable with the great explorers and inventors of the Victorian period

Freedom and failure

The hierarchy and deference of the 1950s has given way to a more liberal or "permissive" society. Birth control, abortion reform and the Equal Pay Act 1970 all helped combat the gender inequality of the 1950s. The Sexual Offences Act 1967 decriminalised homosexual acts between men; 46 years later, gay individuals won the right to marry in England, Scotland and Wales (though not until 2020 in Northern Ireland). Notwithstanding, gender



Military might
During her Commonwealth tour of 1956, Queen Elizabeth II inspects the men of the newly renamed Queen's Own Nigeria Regiment of the Royal West African Frontier Force

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equality and the battle for LGBTQ rights became huge issues in the latter years of the Queen's reign.

Despite the optimism that bloomed at the time of the coronation, the past 70 years have been characterised by the relative decline of the UK, perhaps most markedly in its economy. "There is a lot of talk about the new Elizabethan age, but whether it will be implemented will depend on all ranks in industry," Brigadier Ralph Rayner told parliament in 1952. "The British industrialist and merchant, if given half a chance, will wipe the floor with any other industrialist in the world. The British working man, if given a good lead, will certainly beat any other working man in the world." Yet, misogyny aside, that wasn't to be.

British business failed repeatedly to invest in infrastructure, or to innovate or market at the same rate as their American, Japanese or European competitors. So the "never had it so good" coronation boom years of full employment, high growth and low inflation could not be sustained. UK industry, management and labour relations have proved increasingly uncompetitive on a global stage, despite political rhetoric advocating, both politically and economically, "Global Britain". The Elizabethan era has, overall, been defined by deindustrialisation and economic decline – though, of course, some individuals have become super rich.

In 1952, the UK was the world's second-biggest economy, behind only the US, with a GDP of £247bn. At the start of September 2022, it was the world's sixth biggest after the US, China, Japan, Germany and India. At the same time, the economies of continental Europe have grown from their low postwar base at a much faster pace than that of the UK.

When Elizabeth II assumed the throne, Winston Churchill was UK prime minister, Josef Stalin was leader of the Soviet Union, Harry Truman was US president, and Mao Zedong was the mainland Chinese leader. The Korean War was still being fought, and the People's Republic of China (PRC) was little over two years old. The UK was just about to join the US and the Soviet Union as a nuclear power, with Churchill announcing the atomic bomb project a week after the coronation. Today the PRC is an emerging superpower with the second-largest economy in the world; the Soviet Union long ago disappeared from the geopolitical landscape; and the UK has transitioned to a "lesser power".

To many, the UK's global reputation was indelibly tarnished in the bloody aftermath of the 2003 invasion of Iraq. But fantasies about a second Elizabethan age were already fading long before then. It's hard to overstate the humiliation generated by the Suez crisis of 1956, when Britain, France and Israel conspired together in an unsuccessful attempt to wrench back control of the Suez Canal from Egypt.

The evolving empire

During her Christmas Day broadcast from 1953, Elizabeth II declared: "The Commonwealth bears no resemblance to the empires of the past. It is an entirely new conception built on the highest qualities of the spirit of man: friendship, loyalty and the desire for freedom and peace." A month earlier, the Queen had set off with her husband, the Duke of Edinburgh, on a marathon tour of the Commonwealth nations lasting five-and-a-half months. Pathé newsreels back home showed the scenes

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MINERS WIVES
NOT DOLE
GROUP

Rocky road
A sponsored walk to raise money for families affected by the miners' strike, Northumberland, 1984. Postwar Britain witnessed dramatic industrial decline

End of empire
The last Viceroy of India, Admiral Lord Louis Mountbatten, and Lady Mountbatten return to India after attending the official ceremony on 14 August 1947 to mark Pakistan's independence

of wild enthusiasm that greeted the royal couple wherever they went, from Bermuda to Gibraltar by way of Jamaica, New Zealand, Australia and Uganda.

But the world was changing fast, and nowhere more obviously than in the empire. That process had begun in earnest when India became independent in 1947, five years before Elizabeth took the throne, but accelerated rapidly during the 1950s and 1960s. In the first two decades of Elizabeth's reign, 32 countries achieved independence from Britain. Hong Kong, the last major holding of the empire, was given back to China in 1997.

As the empire fractured, the Commonwealth rose. Under the Queen's leadership, this global alliance grew from a group of eight founding nations in 1952 into a voluntary association of 56 independent countries comprising 2.5 billion people.

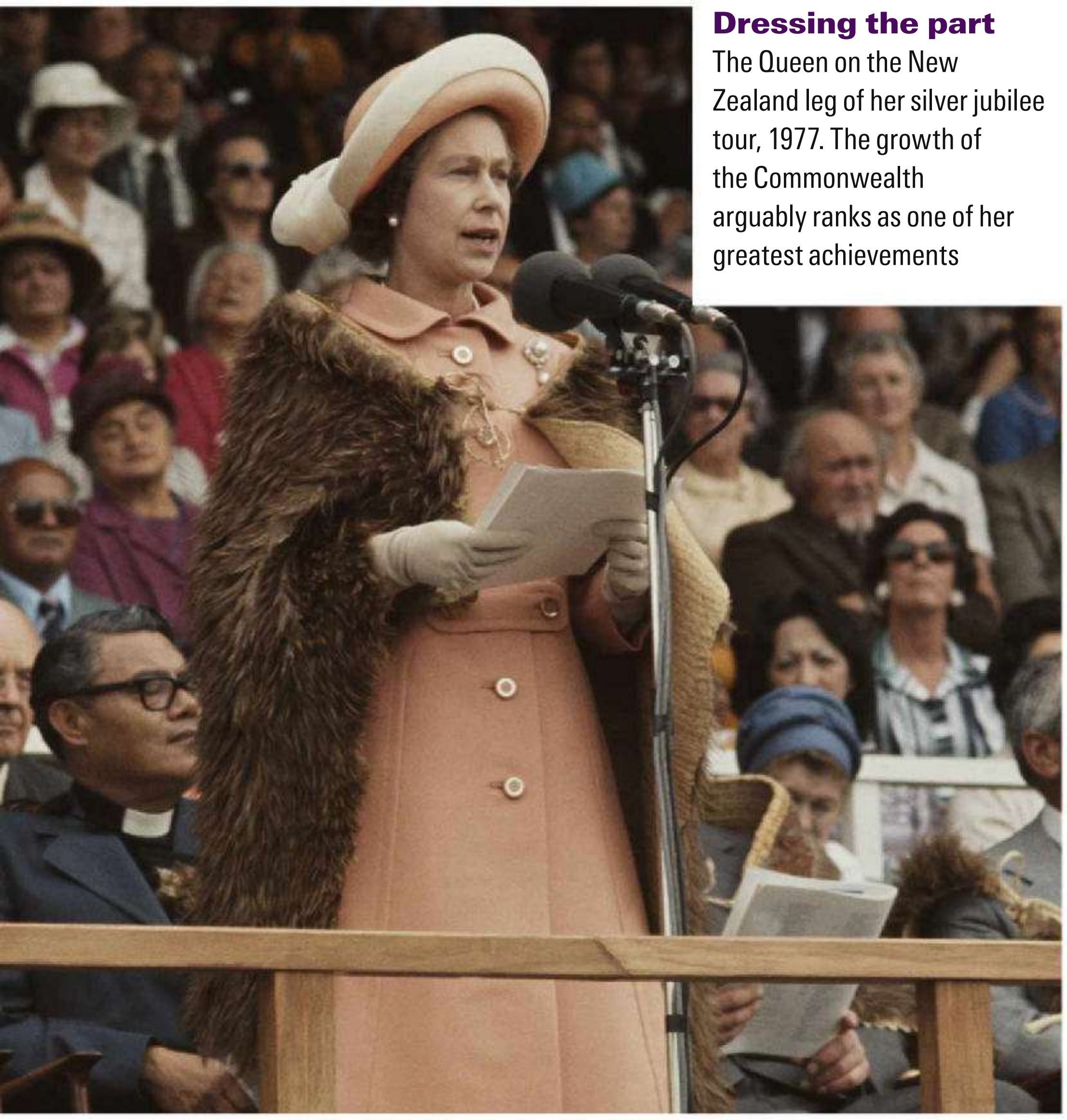
However, some commentators have argued that the benign face of the Queen disguised Britain's complicated history of violence and bloody conflict, citing, for example, the brutal counterinsurgencies in what are now Kenya, Malaysia, Yemen and Cyprus in the latter days of the British empire. These imperial misdeeds have only belatedly led to a reckoning in the UK, with the government paying compensation to some victims of its colonial policies. The push by activists for the removal of statues, the revision of school curriculums glorifying Britain's empire, and further calls for apologies and reparations demonstrates how the consequences of the rapid decolonisation of the first decades of the Elizabethan era are still reverberating.

The Queen was determined to build a new relationship with Britain's old imperial possessions – one based on friendship

Apologies and reparations

That said, the break-up of the empire could have been more rancorous without the Queen's presence. Throughout Britain's transition from an empire to post-imperial power, she made it clear that she was determined to build a new relationship with Britain's old imperial possessions – based on friendship rather than post-imperial bitterness. In 1961 she visited Ghana and danced with President Kwame Nkrumah, who had been one of Africa's most prominent anti-colonial leaders and had been briefly imprisoned by the British.

Certainly, Elizabeth defined this era of unprecedented global transformation by becoming a rare unifying figure; notably, she retained the affection of Commonwealth leaders even when they were hotly opposed to her government's policies. As long as she was alive, many knotty issues were shelved; now she has died there will be much to reappraise. The Commonwealth must plot a new path and decide where its future lies. The organisation has grown of late, welcoming countries that had never actually been under British rule. It's one of the few groups in which mature and emerging



Dressing the part
The Queen on the New Zealand leg of her silver jubilee tour, 1977. The growth of the Commonwealth arguably ranks as one of her greatest achievements

Top of the range
The Queen greets well-wishers gathered on the Mall in London to celebrate her 90th birthday, 2016. She has left behind a nation profoundly uncertain about its place in the world

economies come together with a common agenda. And there are obvious issues in which it could still play a part – climate change and vaccine diplomacy being two examples.

The final years of the new Elizabethan age saw a movement among Caribbean nations to remove the Queen as the titular head of state and to press for reparations for the abuses of the colonial era. The process was accelerated when Barbados became a republic in 2021. Belize has announced a constitutional review of the question, while Jamaica and Antigua & Barbuda have both indicated their intentions to become a republic.

Confused identities

A defining characteristic of the United Kingdom, throughout Elizabeth's reign and today, remains the need to accept and define its changed position in the world. Back in 1962, former US secretary of state Dean Acheson noted in a speech, to the anger of the British press, that "Great Britain has lost an empire and has not yet found a role". He suggested that the country was confused about its future identity – focused on its "special relationship" with the US one moment, then looking toward Europe or the Commonwealth to give it greater meaning and influence the next. These words ring as true today as they did then. Now, Britain is acutely uncertain about its place in the world and facing the repercussions of the scale and pace of change that has defined the second Elizabethan era.

As much as the Queen was a stabilising force for many people, the UK appears to be increasingly divided on geographic lines. Doubts have been growing about whether its four nations can hold together as a United Kingdom. There are growing calls for political change in Northern Ireland, and increased pressure post-Brexit for independence in Scotland, reflected in *The Herald on Sunday*'s headline above a picture of Charles: "Union's Saviour or Last King of Scotland?"

Elizabeth II's reign has encompassed the transformation of culture and class; rapid technological expansion and socio-political change; the end of deference and a distinctive sense of Britishness. Yet the Queen was successfully able to navigate these changes – embracing advances in technology and communication, while also representing a reassuring bastion of tradition and age old values and virtues. She was in the world of change but somehow at once apart from that world. US President Joe Biden described her as "a stateswoman of unmatched dignity and constancy".

That constancy belied the epochal shift experienced by her country – the consequences of which are, with her death, only now coming into full view. H

As much as the Queen was a stabilising force for many people, the UK appears to be increasingly divided on geographic lines

Anna Whitelock is professor of the history of the monarchy at City, University of London

Explore the life of **Queen Elizabeth II** with BBC TV's collection of programmes: *bbc.co.uk/programmes/m001ch5k*

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BBC at 100
PART 12

The BBC at war

The 1944 Normandy landings marked a turning point in the Second World War – and a milestone in war reporting. **DAVID HENDY** describes the months of effort that allowed the BBC to report effectively from the front line

Voices of the conflict
Journalist Richard Dimbleby (top), pictured during the 1944 Normandy landings, and (above) newsreader John Snagge, who had the responsibility of announcing the operation

> “Across occupied Europe, several million were listening eagerly, keen to learn of Allied success or German reprisals”

Just after 9.30am London time on Tuesday 6 June 1944, the world officially learned that Operation Overlord – the largest seaborne invasion in history – was under way. By the time the news was announced on the radio, the first American, British and Canadian troops were already scrambling up the beaches of Normandy and facing intense enemy fire. The landings marked a decisive turning point in the Second World War: the long-awaited opening-up of a “second front” in the campaign to liberate Europe from its Nazi occupiers. But they also represented a decisive moment in broadcasting history. The BBC had been responsible for releasing the momentous news to an anxious listening public and, in the weeks that followed, it would prove to audiences around the world that nearly five years of war had transformed it into a fully fledged news organisation.

From the start, the BBC’s operations were closely integrated with the Allied military effort. Since radio was going to be the means of keeping everyone at home informed about an especially fast-moving event, the BBC clearly needed to make a commitment in resources and airtime that would do justice to the scale of Operation Overlord itself. At the very least, staff and equipment would have to be in the right place at the right time. The military, from General Eisenhower’s Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force downwards, had to share their invasion plans with at least one or two senior people at the BBC – though secrecy remained paramount until the day of invasion itself.

John Snagge, the announcer given responsibility for reading out what was called “Communique Number One”, had spent the early hours of D-Day in a locked room guarded by military police. In the days preceding the broadcast, he had also been charged with discreetly organising what the BBC termed the “alerting period”, designed to ensure the Home, Overseas and European Services would all merge their signals at a moment’s notice. As dawn broke on 6 June, staff in BBC locations across the country were busy opening safes, digesting a series of technical instructions that had been typed up only the day before, and throwing electrical switches so that Snagge’s portentous words could fly into the ether from “every transmitter that was not occupied by the Germans”.

In the combat zone, members of the BBC’s newly formed War Reporting Unit were already at work, having been embedded with different parts of the invading force. Seven reporters had arrived in Normandy in boats, another three had been with assault divisions, and yet more had arrived by glider or parachute. Richard Dimbleby was among those who had been flown over the Channel, though he wasn’t the first to provide listeners at home with an eyewitness account. That honour fell to William Helmore, an Air Commodore who’d observed troops landing on the beaches from his vantage point aboard a Mitchell bomber flying through some “very nasty flak”.

Helmore’s account was broadcast at lunchtime. The first commentary from the ground reached the airwaves later that evening. It came from Howard Marshall, who had been in a landing barge during the first assault. He had witnessed the opening gun battles while boats all around him were being sunk by German mines, and then hitched a boat ride back to the south coast of England. Sitting in a makeshift studio, still dripping wet and with his notebook lost at sea, he sent his dispatch “up the line” to Broadcasting House and from there to the world. “I’m just going to try to tell you very briefly the story of what our boys had to do on the beaches today,” he began.

As the day progressed, more dispatches started to make their way back to London, some beamed directly from mobile army transmitters, others carried back on discs by RAF or navy couriers. By nightfall, the BBC had provided material to an estimated

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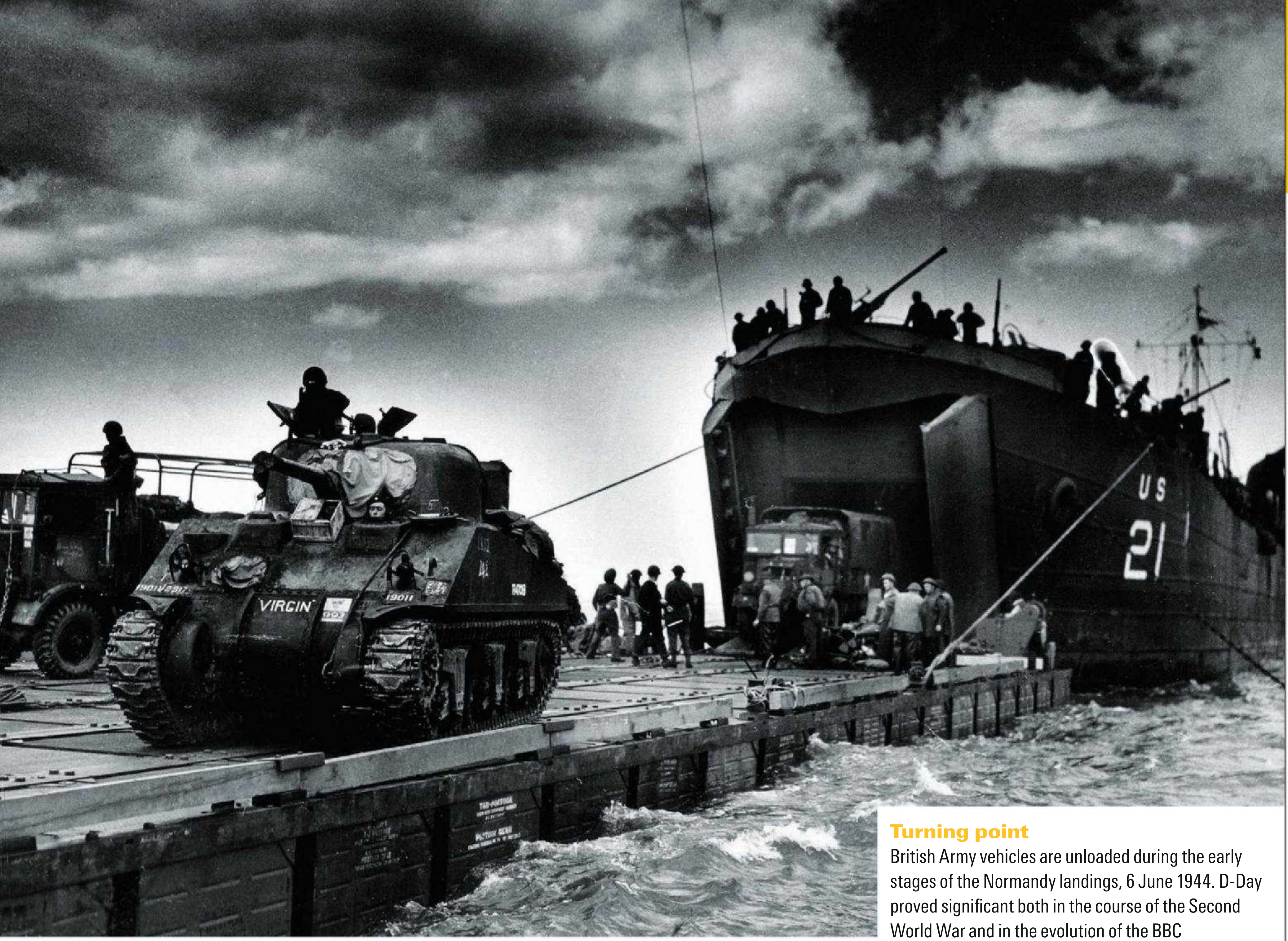


Turning point
British Army vehicles are unloaded during the early stages of the Normandy landings, 6 June 1944. D-Day proved significant both in the course of the Second World War and in the evolution of the BBC

725 radio stations in the US. Across occupied Europe, too, several million people were listening eagerly for news of Allied success or reports of the expected German reprisals.

The art of war reporting

In the coming months, access to good technical support proved vital, as did good relations with military commanders. By the end of June, the BBC's engineers had got three mobile transmitters across the Channel, each one mounted on a truck so that it could take to the road and keep pace with a rapidly moving front line. Mobile military censorship units were also established so that scripts could be cleared quickly. The relationship between journalists and officers was never going to be friction-free. But a base level of trust had been carefully nurtured since 1943. That March, the BBC had taken part in a huge mock military exercise along the Thames which had convinced government ministers and army commanders that reporters in the field of combat would not necessarily be a nuisance.

Members of the War Reporting Unit were subsequently issued with uniforms and trained in reconnaissance techniques, weapons, signals, map reading and tank and aeroplane recognition. Correspondents were reminded that, once they were in the field, anything they reported from the front line would be heard on air by the troops with whom they were embedded – a useful check on any temptation to exaggerate or dramatise. The only member of the unit denied an opportunity to witness active fighting was its sole female member, Audrey Russell – though her humane reports on life behind the lines in France and Belgium would provide vivid proof of her abilities.

The final cog in the BBC's fast-expanding wartime news machine was a suitable place for all this incoming reportage in the peaktime radio schedules. Listeners to the overseas services had the well-established series *Radio Newsreel*. Troops tuning in to the newly created Allied Expeditionary Forces' Programme were provided with a series of their own, *Combat Diary*. And from D-Day onwards the Home Service broadcast a nightly *War Report*, which regularly attracted audiences of up to 15 million with its compulsive mix of news updates, human interest stories, and sound-pictures from the front. It was on *War Report* that British audiences would hear memorable accounts from BBC correspondents who had witnessed the liberation of Paris, the bitter struggle to cross the Rhine, and the fall of Berlin.

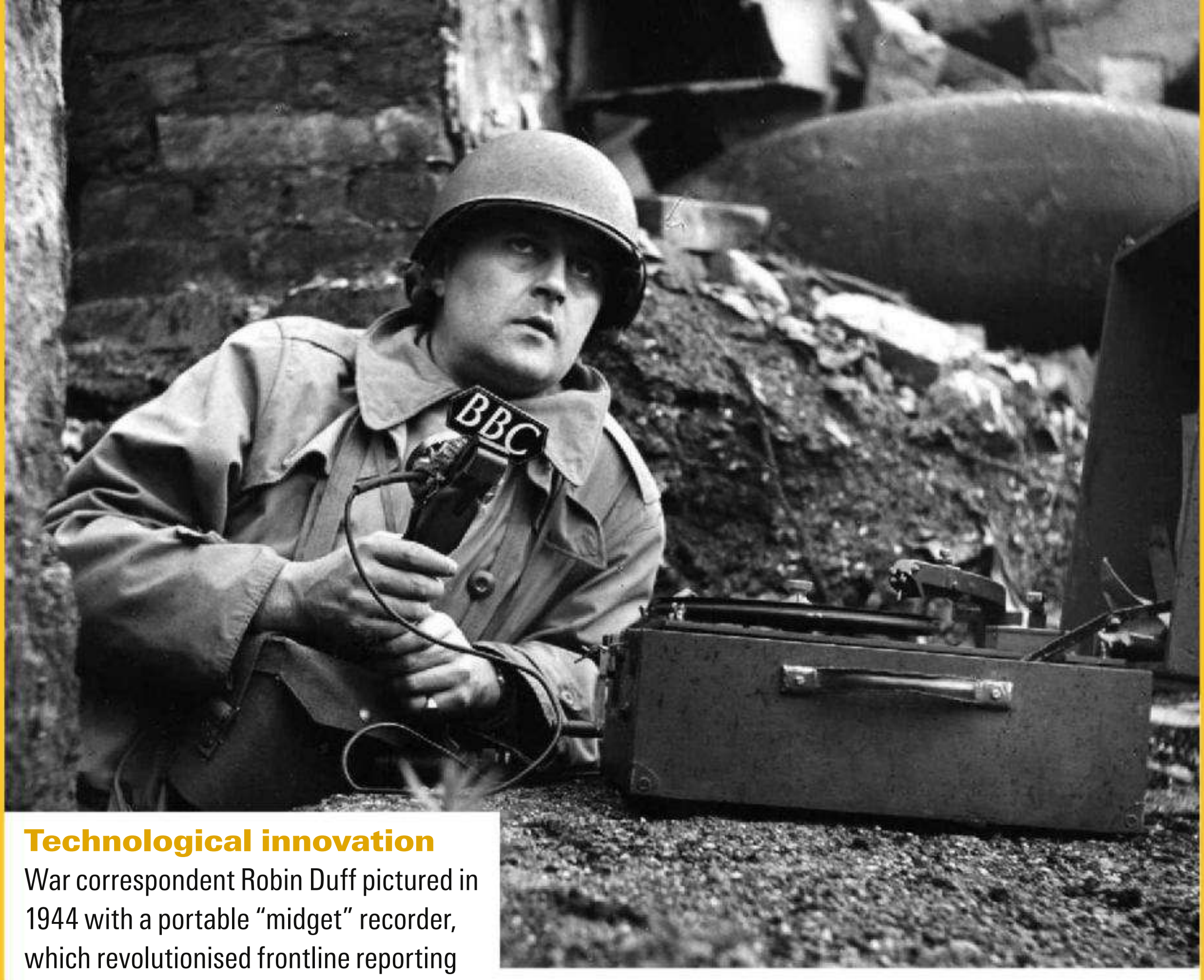
BBC Radio journalist Audrey Russell (centre), gathering material for a daily report on the war, c1944

TOPFOTO/BBC ARCHIVE

No news-gathering machinery could run without a hitch. Two BBC correspondents – Guy Byam and Kent Stevenson – went missing presumed dead while flying over Germany. Two more, Howard Marshall and Robin Duff, had to be suspended for giving military censors the slip in Paris. Recording equipment refused to work during the coldest winter months. And listeners at home grumbled that *War Report* was often "too harrowing or gruesome".

The BBC's biggest problem concerned relations with the Americans. Ordinary GIs were left cold by many of the programmes supplied to the Allied Expeditionary Forces' radio service: the obscure in-jokes of hit series such as *It's That Man Again* – or ITMA, as it was affectionately known by its

News from the front
War correspondent Howard Marshall with a reporting truck, 1944. The BBC's coverage of the conflict required a vast technological and diplomatic effort



Technological innovation
War correspondent Robin Duff pictured in 1944 with a portable "midget" recorder, which revolutionised frontline reporting

British fans – left US soldiers baffled. Their commanders, meanwhile, complained vociferously and repeatedly that BBC bulletins played up British military successes at the expense of American ones.

Even so, this was a news organisation audibly superior to the one that had announced the start of the conflict in 1939. From field correspondents through to producers in the basement of Broadcasting House frantically getting *War Report* on air every night, a large and intricate machinery of behind-the-scenes effort clicked into place: engineers looking after mobile transmitters and portable recorders in every field of combat; women in the Duplicating Section working long hours to print scripts and running orders; control room staff recording incoming dispatches on to disc; announcers on standby day and night.

The BBC's output also reflected a new style: with programme-makers of different departments thrown together, a creative fusion of news and feature-making had produced series that combined straight news with "radiogenic" storytelling. Above all, this was now a BBC taking the microphone to places where things were actually happening. Caen or Arnhem seemed far less remote than Mons or the Somme had during the First World War – something that audiences in Europe and beyond were beginning to appreciate as much as listeners at home. By VE Day in 1945, the BBC had not just become a global news operator: it had secured its future as a global brand. **H**

David Hendy is emeritus professor of media and cultural history at the University of Sussex. His most recent book is *The BBC: A People's History* (Profile, 2022)

For an in-depth exploration of the BBC at war, check out the **100 Voices that Made the BBC** website: *bbc.com/historyofthebbc/100-voices/ww2*

BBC

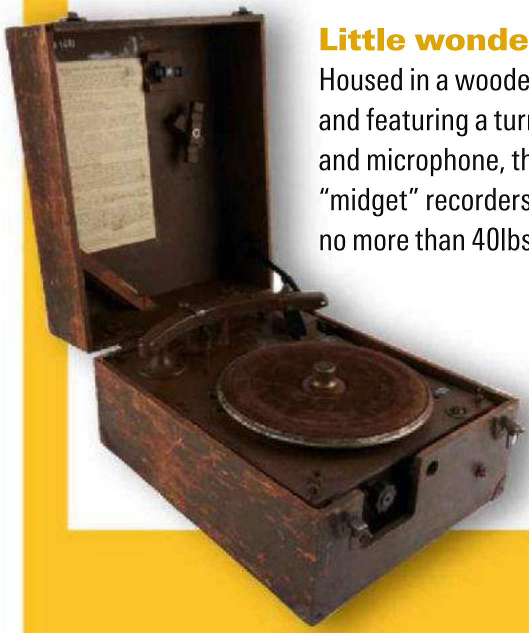
IN FOCUS

Recording goes mobile – and miniature

The ability of correspondents on the front line to record dispatches quickly and easily was a vital ingredient in the BBC's wartime news-gathering operation. Yet in the early years of the conflict, the only equipment available had been incredibly cumbersome. When correspondents such as Richard Dimbleby or Frank Gillard used "mobile" recorders in the North African campaign, that generally meant a disc-cutting machine mounted on a large lorry. In the months running up to D-Day, the corporation's engineers therefore put considerable effort into creating a device that was small, light and robust enough for the War Reporting Unit's latest recruits to use in the rough and tumble of combat.

In June 1944, the BBC's workhorse remained the Type C recorder, which weighed an inconvenient 450lbs. On the eve of invasion, dozens were installed in old military ambulances, or on board ships and aircraft. But work also went on around the clock to design and build a so-called "midget" disc recorder. Each would feature a turntable, a microphone, batteries, and 12 double-sided 10-inch discs, all wrapped up in a wooden case and weighing no more than 40lbs. On D-Day itself, fewer than 20 were ready for use but, by autumn, another 37 had been built and sent off to the front line. This new "midget" recorder transformed the ability of the BBC's war correspondents to create short voice reports or capture location sounds at a moment's notice and in almost any environment.

After the war, lightweight, portable recording devices would transform not just journalism but broadcasting more generally – especially once magnetic tape started to replace discs. In the 1950s and 60s, pioneering radio and TV producers such as Charles Parker and Denis Mitchell would show how ever-smaller cameras and recording devices gave them the freedom to work alone and capture the intimate contours of "ordinary life".



Little wonder
Housed in a wooden case and featuring a turntable and microphone, the "midget" recorders weighed no more than 40lbs (18kg)

> "Recording dispatches quickly was vital to the BBC's wartime news-gathering operation"

BBC ARCHIVE/SCIENCE MUSEUM

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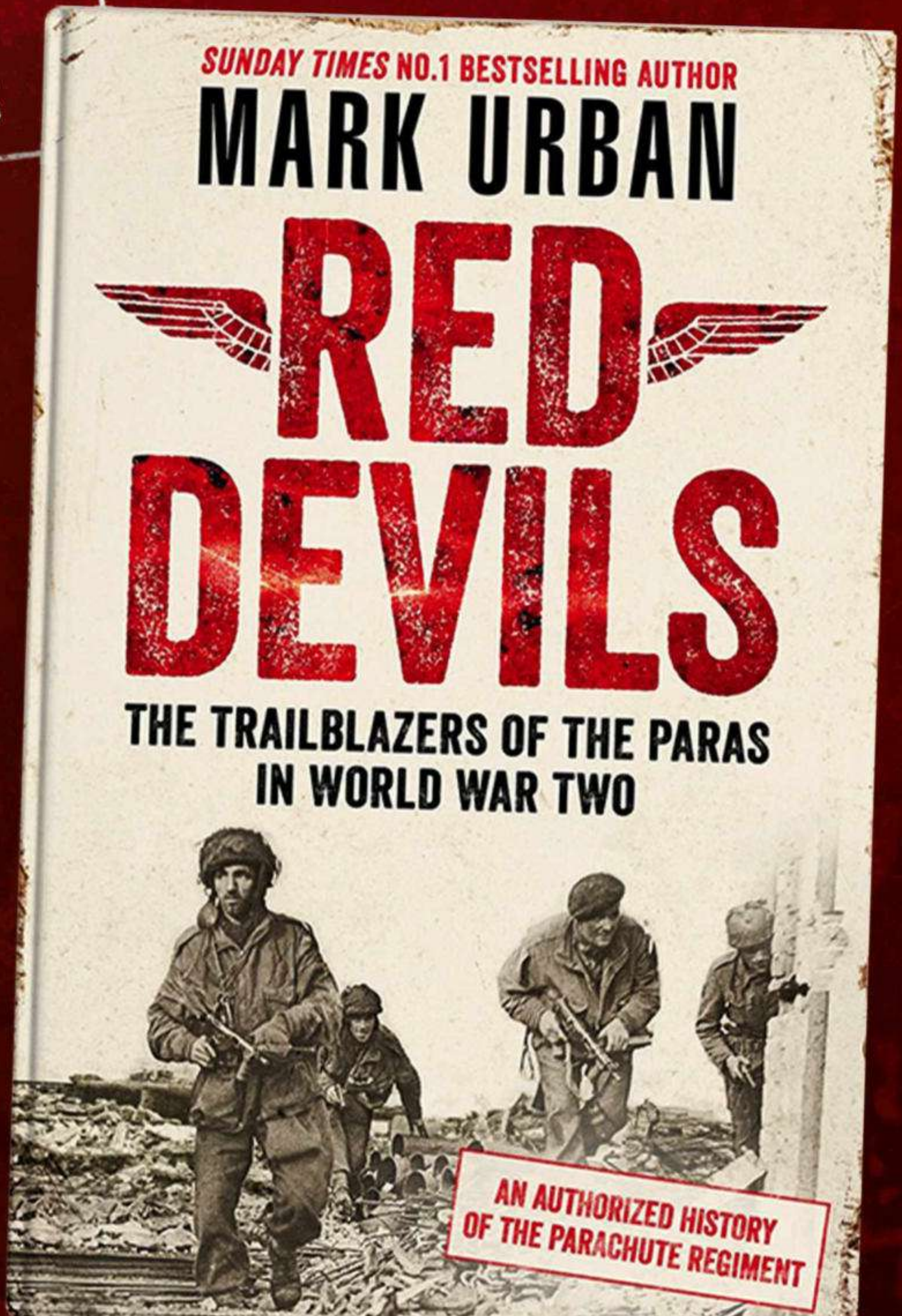
TOGETHER THEY CHANGED THE COURSE OF HISTORY

'RIVETING'
DAMIEN LEWIS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THE BOY WHO DISCOVERED THE BOY KING

When Howard Carter located the entrance to Tutankhamun's tomb, he became an archaeological hero. Yet, as **Toby Wilkinson** reveals, the British Egyptologist failed to credit the person behind the historic find

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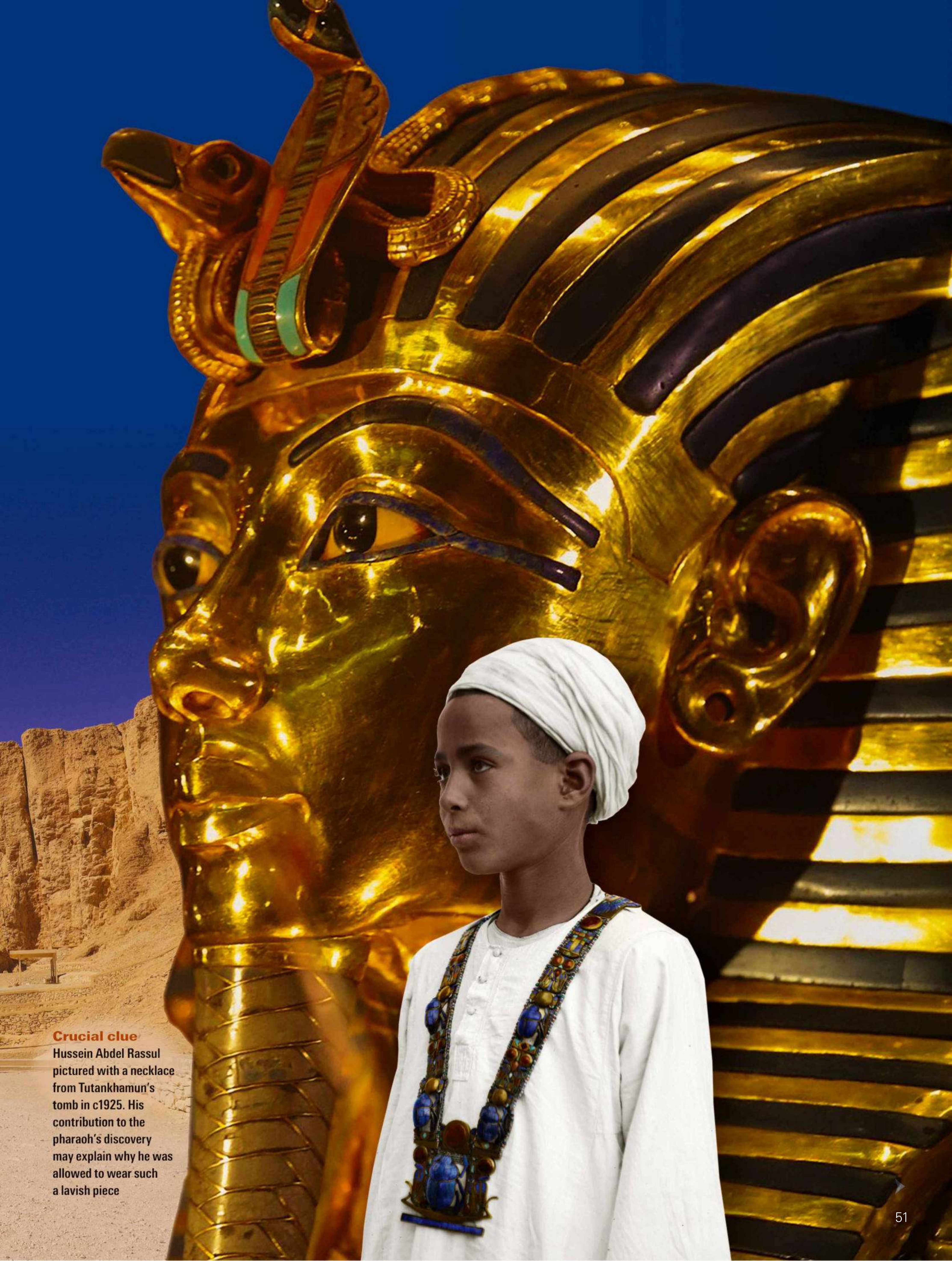
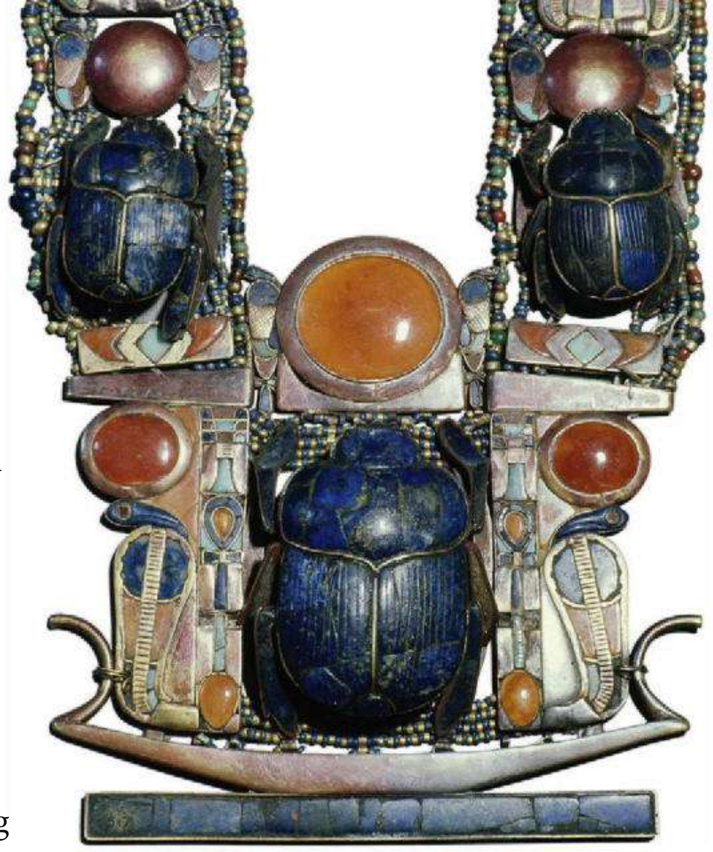


Crucial clue
Hussein Abdel Rassul pictured with a necklace from Tutankhamun's tomb in c1925. His contribution to the pharaoh's discovery may explain why he was allowed to wear such a lavish piece



Crowning glory

A close-up of the necklace that Hussein Abdel Rassul is pictured wearing on page 51. The piece features scarabs carved from lapis lazuli and discs of carnelian, symbols of the rising sun and rebirth

One hundred years ago, on 4 November 1922, an excavation in Egypt’s Valley of the Kings, directed by the British archaeologist Howard Carter, uncovered a step cut into the valley floor. Over the next two days, clearance revealed a descending staircase, terminating at a rubble wall that blocked further access. This was the moment for which Carter and his aristocratic patron, Lord Carnarvon, had been toiling for 15 long years in the heat and dust. Carter immediately sent a telegram to Carnarvon, who was 2,500 miles away at Highclere Castle, his stately home in the south of England: “At last have made wonderful discovery in valley. A magnificent tomb with seals intact. Re-covered same for your arrival. Congratulations.”

When Carnarvon arrived in Luxor on 23 November, he and Carter looked on anxiously as the rubble wall was cleared, revealing a plastered doorway. Now there could be no doubt what they had found: “On the lower part the seal impressions were much clearer, and we were able without difficulty to make out on several of them the name of Tut.ankh. Amen.” In due course, the blocked doorway was dismantled, only to reveal a sloping tunnel, filled from floor to ceiling with limestone chippings. As workmen struggled in the confined space to clear the tunnel, they encountered a second doorway, likewise covered with sealings naming Tutankhamun.

At four o’clock on the afternoon of 26 November, archaeologist and patron gained access to the royal tomb itself. Peering into the darkness with a lighted candle, Carter could not believe his eyes: “At first I could see nothing, the hot air escaping from the chamber causing the candle flame to flicker, but presently, as my eyes grew accustomed to the light, details of the room within emerged slowly from the mist, strange animals, statues and gold – everywhere the glint of gold. For the moment – an eternity it must have seemed to the others, standing by – I was struck dumb with amazement, and when Lord Carnarvon, unable to stand the suspense any longer, inquired anxiously, ‘Can you see anything?’, it was all I could do to get out the words: ‘Yes, wonderful things’”.

Why should such an important object from the tomb have been given to a young Egyptian boy to model?

The discovery of the tomb of the boy-pharaoh Tutankhamun – the greatest archaeological find of all time – has passed into legend. But the story as told by Carter and Carnarvon, and perpetuated in countless retellings since, is not quite the whole truth.

Backbreaking work

Throughout the excavation and clearance of Tutankhamun’s tomb, Carter kept a detailed digging diary and journal. Preserved in the Griffith Institute at the University of Oxford, these precious documents provide a wealth of first-hand information about the archaeological campaign in the Valley of the Kings. But there is one striking omission: nowhere does Carter give credit to the Egyptian labourers who carried out the backbreaking clearance – over six long seasons – of the 200,000 tonnes of rubble and limestone chippings that overlay the entrance to the tomb. Instead, in his account of “years and years of dull and unprofitable work”, the first-person plural is used, without further comment: “We had now dug in the Valley for several seasons, with extremely scanty results.”

In the same vein, Carter recounts the breakthrough that indicated the presence of a

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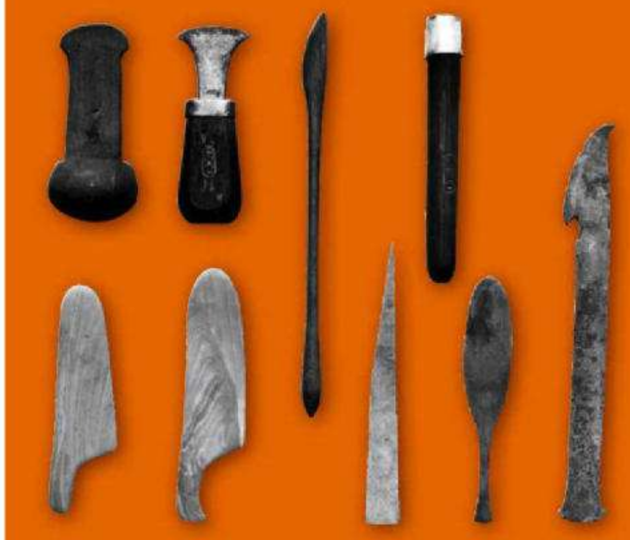
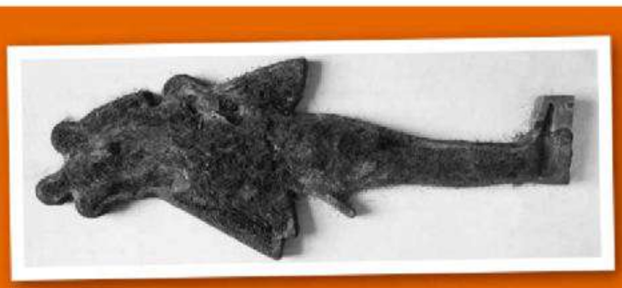
SURPRISING TREASURES OF THE TOMB

Tutankhamun took an array of objects with him to the grave. Here’s a selection of eight of the most unusual



❶ A toolbox for the afterlife

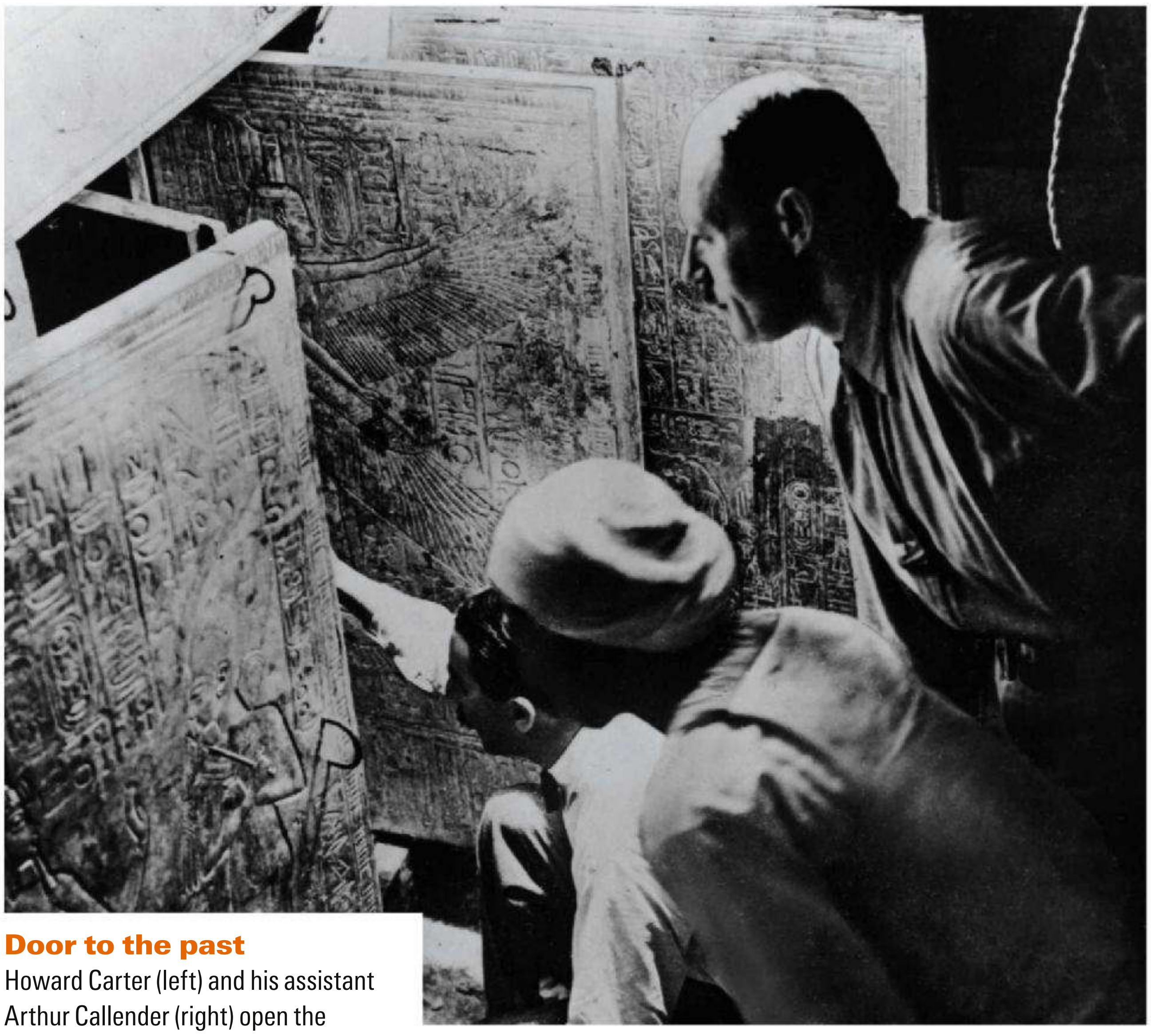
Tutankhamun’s burial equipment contained a range of ritual and practical tools to assist him in the afterlife. One toolbox contained 16 chisels, each of them made from a nugget or nuggets of meteoric iron weighing no more than four grams. The ancient Egyptians exploited their natural resources, but meteoric iron from the Libyan desert was a rare commodity: their word for “iron” was *biayt*, which also meant “miracle” or “wonder”.



❷ A bed inspired by a god

The potency of the cult of Osiris, god of the underworld and fertility, is expressed in one of the oddest grave goods: a nearly 2-metre-long wooden frame shaped to resemble the mummified Osiris with his twin-plumed headdress. Before the king’s burial, the frame was filled with moist Nile silt and scattered with grain. The seeds germinated in the tomb, symbolising the resurrection of god and king alike.

previously undiscovered tomb: "Hardly had I arrived on the work next morning (4 November) than the unusual silence, due to the stoppage of the work, made me realise that something out of the ordinary had happened, and I was greeted by the announcement that a step cut in the rock had been discovered." On closer reading, this description – with its unselfconscious use of "I" and "me" – reveals an aspect of the dig that is generally overlooked: it was the habit of Carter's Egyptian workmen, headed by a trusted foreman, to begin work as soon as the sun had risen, before the archaeologist arrived to oversee operations. The discovery of that crucial first step was made by one of the workers, not by Carter. Piecing together the evidence, we can identify that unsung hero.



Door to the past

Howard Carter (left) and his assistant Arthur Callender (right) open the entrance to the innermost golden shrine in Tutankhamun's tomb. The third figure is an Egyptian worker, who was left unnamed in western accounts

The forgotten boy

One of the reasons why the discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb created such a stir around the world was the series of stunning black and white photographs taken by Harry Burton, who was the staff photographer of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. Burton's images of the tomb and its contents are striking for their large format, fine detail and dramatic lighting. Among the hundreds of images from the time is one of an Egyptian boy, aged between nine and 12, wearing a plain white linen galabeya (a traditional loose-fitting robe) and headcloth. Suspended around his neck is one of the most lavish and dramatic pieces of jewellery from Tutankhamun's tomb: a heavy pectoral (a large necklace worn over the chest), chain and counterpoise featuring a series of large scarab beetles carved from lapis lazuli.

Why should such an important object from the tomb have been given to an Egyptian boy to model? The answer, omitted from Carter's account, may be that the boy in question, Hussein Abdel Rassul, had discovered the tomb.

The Abdel Rassul family were longstanding and somewhat notorious residents of western Thebes. In the 1870s, one of their number had discovered the cache of royal mummies hidden in the cliffs at Deir el-Bahri, behind the Valley of the Kings, when a stray goat disappeared down a partially concealed tomb shaft.

Fifty years later, young Hussein Abdel

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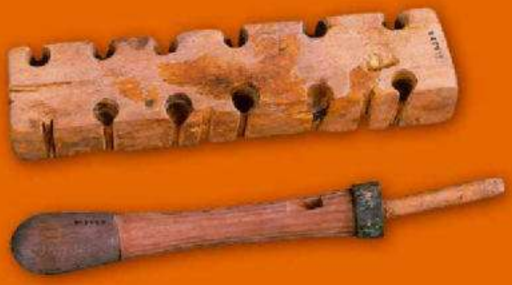
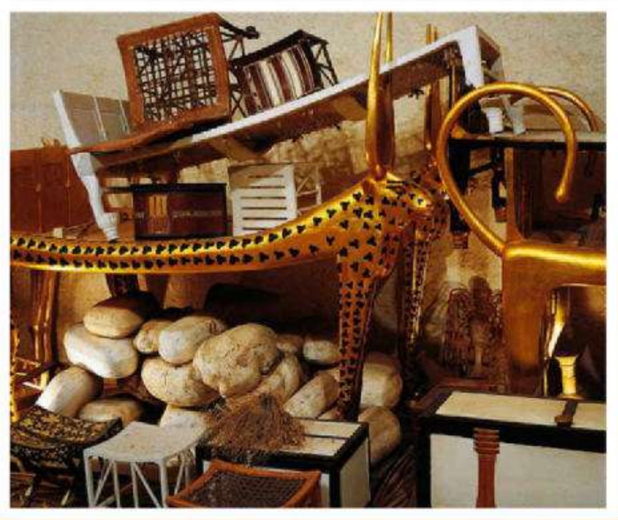
3 A drill for starting fires

As an alternative to a flintstone, the ancient Egyptians used a fire drill. Shaped like a bodkin, the drill was rotated by means of a bow; grooved sides aided traction and the fire stick was detachable. The accompanying fire stock is a rectangular piece of wood, 20cm long, with six circular notches along each side to hold the tinder. Friction from the drill produced the spark.





4 Boxes of preserved meat

Among the first objects to be glimpsed by Carter were 48 two-piece boxes. Most of them were roughly egg-shaped, giving little clue as to their contents. They were found to contain joints of meat – mostly from oxen, but also a goose. The sycamore-wood boxes had been waterproofed and sealed on the inside with hot resin, and the meat showed a remarkable degree of preservation.

5 Loincloths of the finest linen

Ancient Egyptians had a limited range of garments to choose from. Most fundamental was a triangular loincloth, worn by people of every rank. Although the Egyptians used other fibres, including sheep's wool and palm leaf, linen was the most common. It could be made in a range of grades, from coarse to fine, and Tutankhamun's loincloths are of the finest type of linen, almost akin to silk.

Rassul was employed by Carter as a water boy, responsible for bringing water by donkey from the Nile to the dig site in the Valley of the Kings. The water jars had pointed bases, so shallow holes had to be dug in the ground to stop them toppling over. It was while he was digging such a hole, on the early morning of 4 November 1922, that the boy revealed a flat stone step in the floor of the valley. And the rest is history.

The story of the water boy who discovered the tomb first came to Egyptologists' attention in a book published in 1978 by Thomas Hoving, the director of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. Hoving quoted an unpublished memoir by Howard Carter's own agent, Lee Keedick, who claimed that Carter himself had revealed the truth.

Erased from the narrative

The subsequent whitewashing of the water boy's contribution from the official account of the discovery exemplifies the near invisibility of the Nile Valley's inhabitants from the annals of Egyptology. As early as the 1820s, in the aftermath of the Napoleonic expedition to Egypt, 44 Egyptian students were sent from Al-Azhar in Cairo to Paris to learn modern skills; they were led by an imam named Rifa'a Rafi el-Tahtawi, who went on to become a major figure in his country's 19th-century renaissance. In 1868, he published the first account of ancient Egyptian history in Arabic. Today, he is all but forgotten.

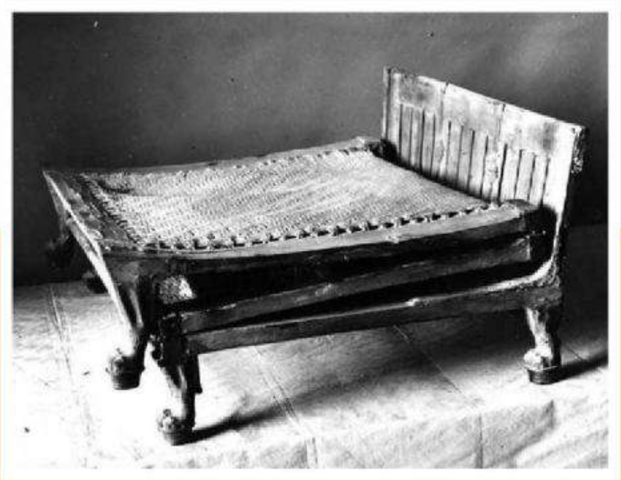
In the 1880s, when scientific methods of excavation and recording were first brought to the Nile Valley, the British archaeologist Flinders Petrie was working at the site of Qift in Upper Egypt when he made a discovery that surprised him (with his entrenched colonial attitudes): "Among this rather untoward people we found however, as in every place, a small percentage of excellent men; some half-dozen were of the very best type of native, faithful, friendly and laborious, and from among these workmen we have drawn about 40 to 60 for our work… they have formed the backbone of my Upper Egyptian staff, and I hope that I may keep these good friends so long as I work anywhere within reach of them."

The men from Qift ("Qiftis") whom Petrie trained passed their skills to their descendants, some of whom are still employed as professional diggers by archaeologists

Entrenched views

Sir Flinders Petrie, pictured here in a cellar filled with artefacts in c1930, brought scientific method to archaeological excavation in the 1880s. His writings reveal his colonial approach to Egypt and its people

> Western archaeologists were happy to take the credit, while barely acknowledging their indigenous labourers



◀ ⑥ An anti-termite camp bed

Tutankhamun's tomb contained the only camp bed to survive from ancient Egypt. Made of lightweight wood and 179cm long, it folds twice for ease of transport and storage. The legs are shaped like lions' feet, and the footboard is panelled. It was originally painted with limewash to deter termites.

⑦ A toy chest

Tutankhamun was around nine years old when he came to the throne and little more than 18 when he died, so it seems appropriate that one of the artefacts buried with him was his toy chest. It contained a random selection of objects, including a game board and a pair of slings. In his toys, we perhaps come closest to the real-life Tutankhamun. Even a boy king had time for play.

⑧ A first-aid kit

Faced with a barrage of debilitating and deadly diseases, the ancient Egyptians had recourse to prayers, magic spells and protective amulets, but also practical medicine. Somewhere along this spectrum is Tutankhamun's first-aid kit. A rounded box of ebony and cedar, it contained different sized bandages, a finger stall (like a thimble), a protective linen gauntlet and a crystalline limestone armlet. This odd assortment of items would have been good for preventing and treating cuts and bruises, but not much more.

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Did a hippopotamus kill Tutankhamun?
Listen to our recent podcast series about the boy king at
historyextra.com/tag/tutankhamun-podcast-series

working in Egypt; "Qifti" is common parlance among Egyptologists for a skilled site foreman. Yet rarely, if ever, were the Qiftis or their compatriots acknowledged in the publications of Egyptian digs.

Colonial attitudes

Following the British invasion and occupation of Egypt in 1882, the colonial authorities allowed an Egyptian called Ahmed Kamal to establish a school of Egyptology for Egyptians, but this pioneering move lasted only three years. Kamal was later promoted to assistant curator at the Egyptian Museum, becoming the first Egyptian to be employed in a substantive position there. His appointment was followed shortly afterwards by that of Ahmed Najib as chief inspector of antiquities, but these were token gestures. Generation after generation of western archaeologists were happy to take the credit for a succession of great discoveries, while barely acknowledging the indigenous labourers who made it possible.

Carter was no exception. Early on in his archaeological career, before he teamed up with Carnarvon, he worked at Thebes for the American philanthropist Theodore Davis. Together, they found the longest and deepest tomb in the Valley of the Kings, created for the female pharaoh Hatshepsut (six generations before Tutankhamun). The whole tomb, from entrance to burial chamber, was filled with stone chippings, rubbish and bat droppings. Clearing it was hot, dirty and dangerous work, carried out by an army of poorly paid Egyptian workmen, but Davis barely acknowledged them in his publication, other than to reassure readers that "happily the work was so well watched and conducted that no accidents occurred, though many of the men and boys were temporarily overcome by the heat and bad air".

In the subsequent discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb, Carter was thus only the latest in a long line of Egyptologists to downplay the role of his workers in the published account. Furthermore, despite professing a scientific approach, he was not immune to gilding his narrative when it suited him. The famous phrase "wonderful things" was a later embellishment; Carter's journal from the day of the discovery is more prosaic: "When Lord Carnarvon said to me 'Can you see anything?' I replied to him, 'Yes, it is wonderful.'"

Writing in the year of the water boy's chance find, another British Egyptologist, Arthur Weigall, epitomised the condescending western attitude towards other peoples alongside a grudging acceptance of their right to self-determination that characterised colonial attitudes towards Egypt in the years that followed the First World War: "In Egypt, where scientific excavations are conducted entirely by Europeans and Americans, one has to consider… one's duty to the Egyptians, who care not one jot for their history, but who, nevertheless, as the living descendants of the pharaohs should be the nominal stewards of their ancient possessions."

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Ancient wonders
Howard Carter and an unnamed Egyptian worker clean one of the three golden coffins found nested inside the sarcophagus of Tutankhamun

Egyptian Egyptologist Ahmed Kamal (1851–1923). He worked as assistant curator at the Egyptian Museum, a rare example of the colonial authorities recognising a native archaeologist

It is hardly surprising that the discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb fed a growing sense of Egyptian nationalism: after 1922, the people of the Nile Valley wished to be masters of their future, as well as of their past. As the world marks the centenary of the discovery, it is high time to acknowledge the significant contribution of Egyptians to the story of Egyptology, not least the boy who discovered the boy king. H

Toby Wilkinson is an Egyptologist and author. His latest book, *Tutankhamun's Trumpet: The Story of Ancient Egypt in 100 Objects*, was published by Picador in hardback in May 2022

An episode of the BBC Radio 4 series **The Birth of Now** explored the discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb
bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/m0013zhs

A DYNASTY OF DESPOTS

From the colossal temples of Luxor to Tutankhamun's golden death mask, the pharaohs of ancient Egypt's golden age created some of history's greatest treasures. Yet, writes **Guy de la Bédoyère**, behind the glittering facade lay a society built on brutality, inequality and staggering levels of corruption

AKG-IMAGES

A statue of Thutmose III who, in the second millennium BC, conquered more land than any other pharaoh, ransacking the region for booty and tribute

Royal court
Amenhotep III's Sun Court at the temple of Luxor. Sites such as this wowed later visitors and archaeologists who were dazzled by Egypt's golden age

On 26 November 1922, when Howard Carter reported what he could make out in the gloom of a dusty chamber in the Valley of the Kings, a new phase of Egyptomania began. For more than 100 years, since Napoleon's Egyptian campaign at the turn of the 19th century, Europeans and North Americans had been enthralled by the architecture, art, design and dress of this ancient civilisation.

Carter's discovery was different, though. "Everywhere the glint of gold!" he famously recalled of the moment he first saw the wonders of Tutankhamun's tomb. The scene was set for an international fixation with this gilded young pharaoh who presided over a glittering court of fabulous wealth. Tutankhamun seduced the world, further sensationalising the popular image of Egypt at its height during the 18th Dynasty (c1550–1295 BC).

Monuments such as the temples at Luxor and Karnak in southern Egypt had already stunned visitors and archaeologists alike. They spoke of a Bronze Age imperialist state possessed of astonishing confidence, led by chariot-borne pharaohs firing off a fusillade of arrows at their cowering foes.

Yet look beyond the dazzling architecture, the power and the riches, and there's a darker tale to be told about ancient Egypt's so-called golden age. It's a story of wealth, glory and political power being monopolised by a tiny, spectacularly self-entitled elite, while everyone else was left to scrabble around in the dirt.

Dynamic forces

The 18th Dynasty was born out of an episode of disorder known today as the Second Intermediate Period. Around 1550 BC, a warrior king called Ahmose I emerged from obscurity to expel the Asiatic Hyksos from the Nile Delta region. Adapting the Hyksos's horse-drawn chariot, Ahmose transformed Egypt's army into a dynamic force that tore through the near east and Nubia (north-east Africa). He also created the Egyptian royal liberation myth that legitimated the dynasty's hold on power, posing as the protector of *maat* (truth and harmony) from the forces of chaos.

The pharaohs diverted Egypt's resources into self-glorification and temples to the gods who backed their power

Ahmose and his successors diverted Egypt's resources into self-glorification and the magnificence of temples to the gods who backed their power. No wonder most of them claimed to have been sired by the king of the gods, Amun himself. Indeed, Amun's temple at Karnak became a state within a state.

The kings were gleefully backed by the elites, who were on the make just as much as their rulers. Take Ahmes, son of Ibana, a brilliantly successful soldier – or so he claimed – under the first three kings of the 18th Dynasty: Ahmose, Amenhotep I and Thutmose I. His tomb biography itemises his derring-do, recounting how his admiring kings handed him shares of booty, slaves and land, as well as promoting him to the highest position in the armed forces. "I have been rewarded with gold seven times before the entire land, and also with male and female slaves. I have been endowed with many fields," he bragged.

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REIGNS OF TERROR

Eight of the most powerful figures of Egypt's golden age

Ahmose I

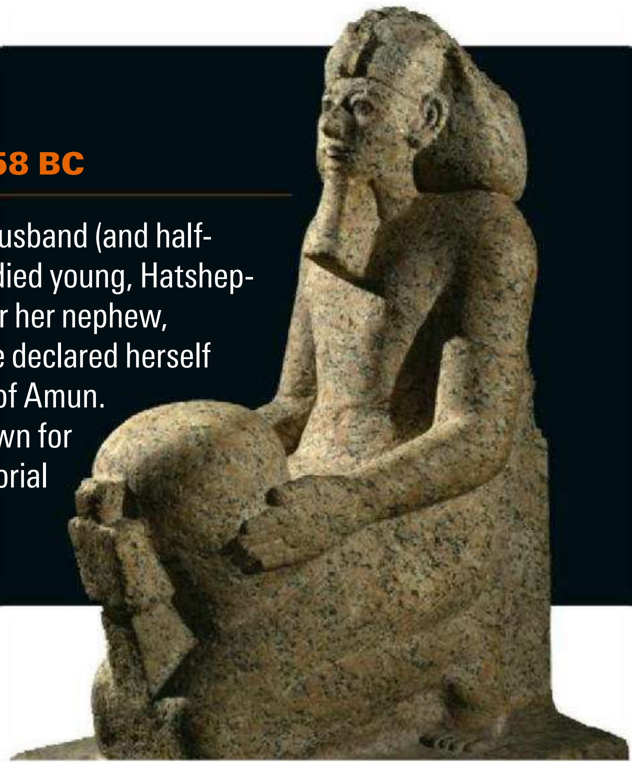
ruled c1555–1525 BC

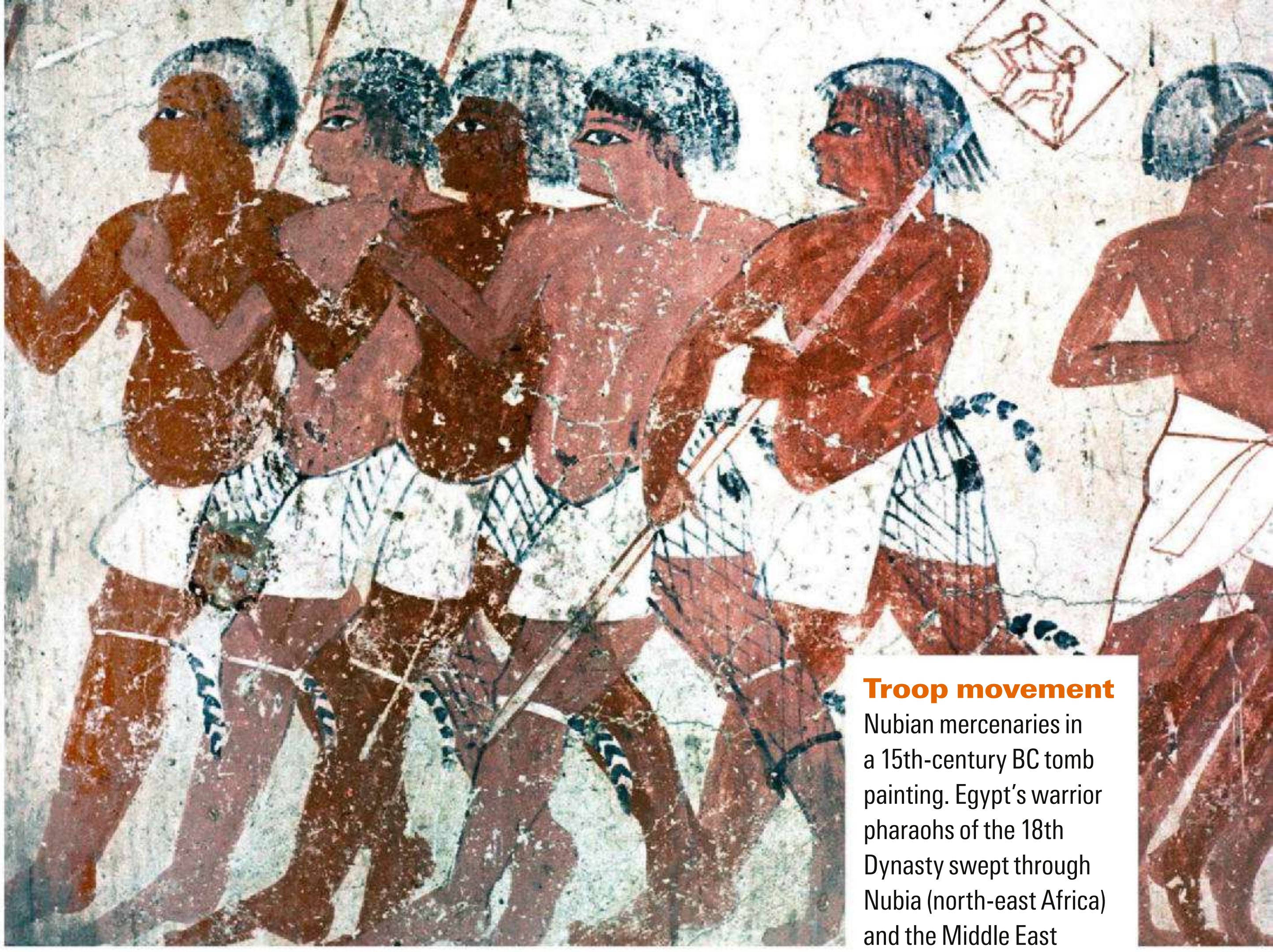
The dynamo who founded the 18th Dynasty led Egypt's armies in expelling the Hyksos rulers of northern Egypt, reunifying the nation and legitimising his dynasty's hold on power. Ahmose was adaptable and innovative – he modernised Egypt's army by adopting the Hyksos chariot – and set the nation on the path to regional dominance.

Hatshepsut

ruled c1473–1458 BC

Widowed when her husband (and half-brother) Thutmose II died young, Hatshepsut acted as regent for her nephew, Thutmose III, until she declared herself king, the chosen one of Amun. Today she is best known for her magnificent memorial mortuary temple in western Thebes.





Troop movement Nubian mercenaries in a 15th-century BC tomb painting. Egypt's warrior pharaohs of the 18th Dynasty swept through Nubia (north-east Africa) and the Middle East

Thutmose I was equally boastful. A typically tendentious stela inscription from one of his Nubian wars claimed that so many of the enemy archers had been killed that the valleys were "flooded with their innards", and all of the local birds were unable to carry off the body parts. This was routine pharaonic bombast: inscriptions always portrayed the king as a dynamic superhero, and his hapless Nubian or Asiatic foes as witless cowards led by imbeciles.

War profits were mostly spent on conspicuous waste, but helped create an illusion of permanence. State vanity building projects were designed to glorify the regime as part of that mirage. Take as an example the works of Hatshepsut, daughter of Thutmose I. Widowed after the death of her husband (also her half-brother) Thutmose II in 1479 BC, she acted as regent for her half-nephew, the child Thutmose III, before declaring herself king alongside him. Because Egypt had no concept of the queen regnant, she had to redefine their role as a composite king *and* queen.

Exulting in her power and wealth, Hatshepsut commissioned her vast terraced mortuary temple in western Thebes (now Luxor), designed by her steward and admirer-in-chief, Senenmut. At Karnak she erected several obelisks, including two that towered over the temple, tipped with glittering electrum. These honoured Amun, her divine father, who had chosen her – so she claimed – to be king. Inscriptions on them record her musing: "My imagination runs riot, wondering what the common people who see my monument in the years to come will say."

Following her death in 1458 BC, the now-adult Thutmose III roared into action with a vigour that left the near-eastern kings shaking in their sandals. Leading his army with bravado and recklessness, Thutmose conquered more territory than any other pharaoh.

Thutmose III's *Annals*, inscribed on a wall at Karnak, comprise a triumphant account of systematic brutalisation and greedy acquisitiveness, itemising his booty with covetous precision. In the first year of conquest alone, the haul included 924 chariots from the enemy army and allied princes. Livestock seized included 20,500 sheep, and he also took several thousand slaves and a "silver statue with a golden head". The detailed inventory lists everything from knives to "one large jar of Syrian workmanship" and 207,300 sacks of wheat. Year on year, more piled in, along with several trophy wives for Thutmose's harem.

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Royal profiteering

During this period, Egypt's only interest was profiteering, backed by a constant threat of violence. Nothing was done to create a sustainable system of provincial government. Instead, a teetering hierarchy of avaricious, nepotistic officials and priests squabbled over position and power. They poured their kickbacks into tombs and chapels to memorialise themselves and advertise their families' greatness, much like the "prodigy houses" of Elizabethan England 3,000 years later.

One such official was Rekhmire, vizier to Thutmose III and his son Amenhotep II. This swaggering bigwig (who indeed wore a big wig to prove his status) built himself an extravagant memorial chapel at Thebes. Scenes inscribed there depict the great man lording it over his underlings as they slaved on various projects, and tribute bearers from foreign lands carrying in epic quantities of goods for the Egyptian state.

Texts at his chapel boast how "greatly loved" and "greatly respected" Rekhmire was, and that he was the beneficiary of royal favour. This chapel was an extravagant monument showcasing his status, paid for out of the profits of high office, legitimate or otherwise. It was later desecrated, suggesting that he fell from favour – a fate that befell more than a few major officials. In the superheated context and bitter rivalries of a Bronze Age superstate court, the stakes were enormous.

One gets the measure of these pompous martinets from a letter sent by Sennefer, another high official under Amenhotep II, to

Amenhotep II

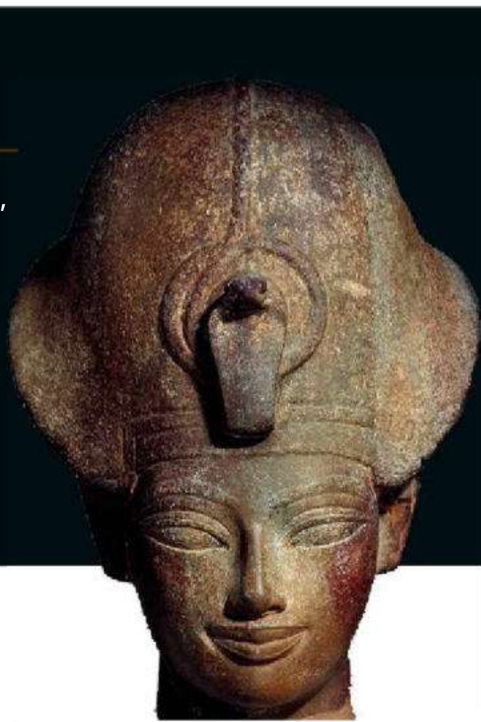
ruled c1425–1400 BC

Under Amenhotep's rule, the trope of the chariot-borne king firing off arrows at his hapless Asiatic and Nubian foes was refined, copied by his successors as the defining image of Egyptian royal power in the New Kingdom. A brutal man, he presided over atrocities including the immolation of captives.

Amenhotep III

ruled c1390–1352 BC

With his domineering and powerful wife, Tiye, Amenhotep III presided over Egypt at its wealthiest, when indulgence and extravagance reached new heights. He ruled his domain from his vast palace and temple complex in western Thebes, showcasing Egypt's power in jubilee celebrations attended by foreigners handing over endless tribute.



a farmer, demanding that food and flowers be made ready for his visit. "Do not let me find fault with you concerning your post," he ranted. "Do not have it lacking in good order… You shall not slack, for I know that you are sluggish and fond of eating lying down."

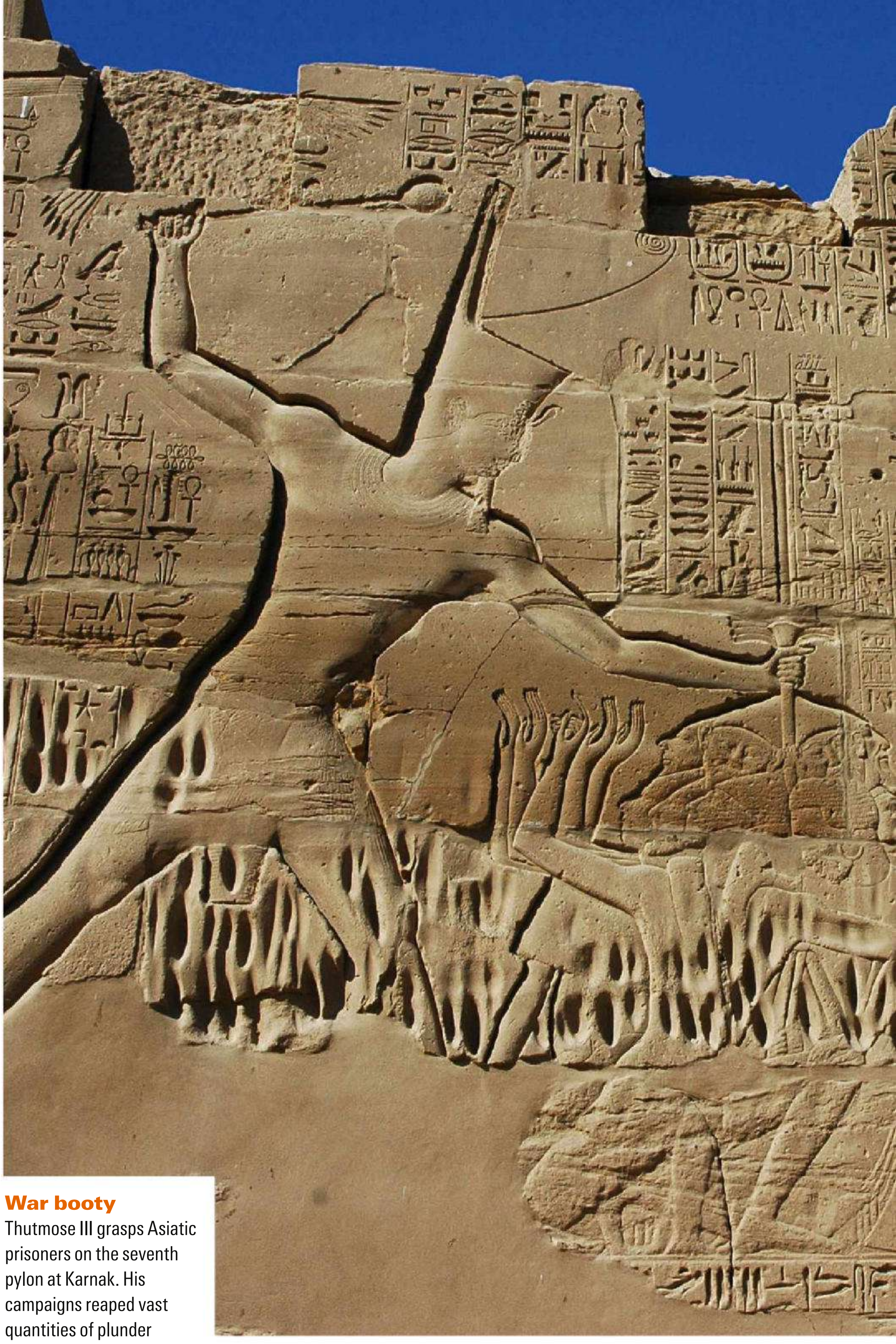
Theft was endemic, a consequence of the staggering inequality pervasive in Egypt at the time. Of course, there's no point in judging a Bronze Age nation by the standards of today, but in Egypt the gap steadily widened as the elite abused its power. Egyptian kings and high officials happily took from other nations and even from each other. Kings purloined or demolished their predecessors' monuments, absorbed their achievements, and sometimes even helped themselves to grave goods.

Egypt's downtrodden underclass were also fully aware of the spoils waiting for those courageous enough to raid graves, often helped or even commissioned by corrupt officials. Tomb-robbing really took off in the centuries following the 18th Dynasty, but two break-ins at Tutankhamun's tomb soon after his burial in c1327 BC show that gangs were already at work then. All were prepared to risk the brutal punishments meted out to criminals, including mutilation and impalement.

Heights of extravagance

Many of the kings of the 18th Dynasty were young adults or even infants when they succeeded to the throne. So it was with Amenhotep III (ruled c1390–1352 BC), great-grandson of Thutmose III, who was still a child when he became king. Yet so embedded was the system and the divine myth with which the royal line had surrounded itself that such young kings ruled unchallenged. The otiose Amenhotep III and his fiercely dominant wife, Tiye, presided over a culture of solar worship, with the king as the supreme mortal. His reign reached new heights of extravagance.

Most foreign nations handed over tribute rather than risk conflict. Surviving diplomatic correspondence shows that Amenhotep III's

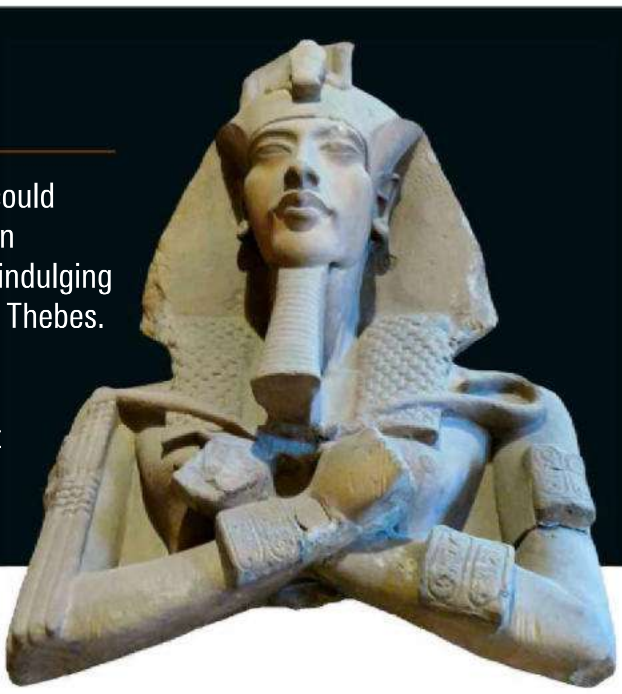


War booty
Thutmose III grasps Asiatic prisoners on the seventh pylon at Karnak. His campaigns reaped vast quantities of plunder

Akhenaten

ruled c1352–1336 BC

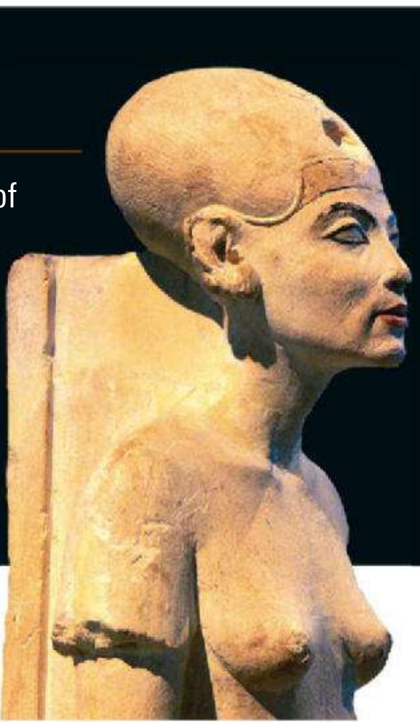
As Amenhotep IV, this pharaoh could have followed his predecessors in promoting the cult of Amun and indulging in yet more grandiose projects in Thebes. Instead, he changed his name to Akhenaten and, with his queen, Nefertiti, moved the whole court north to found a new cult centre to the solar disc, Aten.

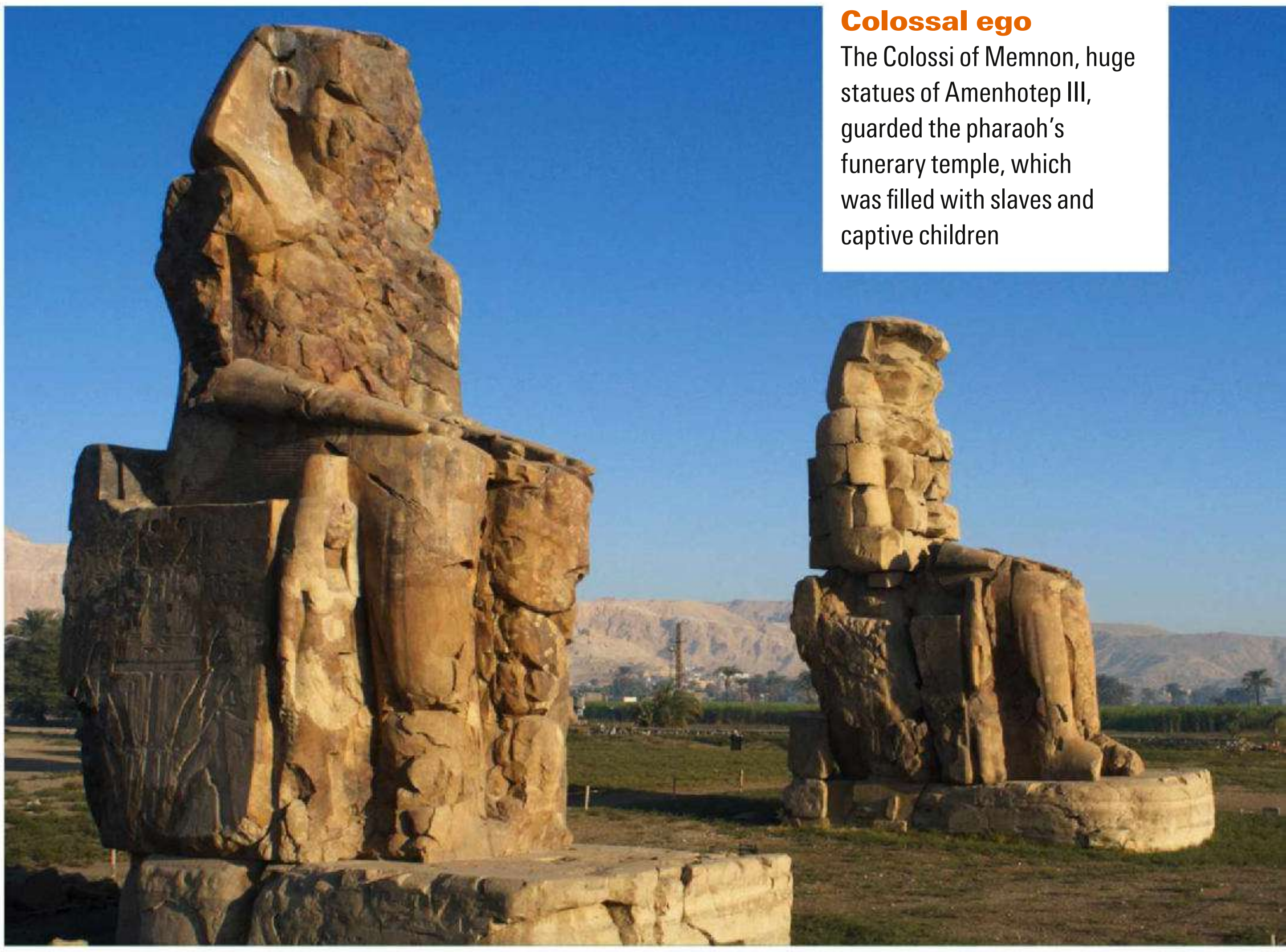


Nefertiti

ruled c1338–1336 BC

Nefertiti was a highly visible part of Akhenaten's religious revolution. Together they provided the supreme example of the composite male-female Egyptian royal identity. Nefertiti became a joint king with her husband and may even have ruled on her own briefly after his death.





Colossal ego
The Colossi of Memnon, huge statues of Amenhotep III, guarded the pharaoh's funerary temple, which was filled with slaves and captive children

BRIDGEMAN/GETTY IMAGES

neighbours constantly sought his friendship and benevolence. They took infantile pleasure in receiving evidence of his approval and good intent in the form of letters and gifts. And they grew petulant and worried if these seemed in any way to devalue their conceits about their standing in his eyes.

Amenhotep III built a sprawling palace complex on the west bank of the Nile at Thebes, and a memorial mortuary temple nearby, with courts and pylons fronted by colossi depicting himself. The temple was filled with slaves, and accommodated "the children of the princes of all the countries of the captivity of His Majesty". It was also surrounded by "settlements of Syrians, colonised by the children of princes", showcasing Amenhotep's power.

The temple's two front statues, the so-called Colossi of Memnon, still stand. In his dedication speech, Amenhotep mentioned the "great rejoicing because of their size". These vast statues, each more than 18 metres high and weighing perhaps 700 tonnes, were carved from blocks of stone brought from near the site of modern Cairo. They were far from accurate depictions, though. If the mummy believed to be his has been correctly identified, Amenhotep was a man barely over 5ft tall, afflicted with rotten teeth, obesity and his inbred dynasty's congenital overbite.

Such figures were designed to show that the king was bigger and more powerful than anyone else, but also to trumpet the capabilities of the Egyptian state. The creation of such statues, and most of the gigantic monuments, palaces and temples, involved startling levels of labour and danger for ordinary Egyptians and foreign slaves. Most of these projects were never finished; perhaps going slow was one way for the workers to fight back.

The creation of huge statues and monuments involved startling levels of labour and danger for ordinary Egyptians

Aten's agents on Earth

Akhenaten, son of Amenhotep III and Tiye, and his queen Nefertiti launched a religious revolution. He famously shut down the cult of Amun and that of most other gods, supplanting them with worship of the Aten, the solar disc. The Aten was not new, but the idea of putting it centre stage was. Akhenaten and Nefertiti were the Aten's agents on Earth – the supreme medium through which the Aten's powers could be accessed.

A huge Aten complex was built at Karnak using forced labour. In the face of resistance from established interests, though, around 1348 BC Akhenaten and Nefertiti abandoned Thebes and moved the whole court north to the site now known as Tell el-Amarna (or simply Amarna), on the Nile roughly midway between Luxor and Cairo. Here they established a new city, Akhet-aten ("Horizon of the Aten"), with palaces and temples where they could indulge their ecstatic cult, bathed in the rays of the Aten. They cruised down the Amarna strip in their chariots, substituting themselves for the old cult statues and posing in *tableaux vivants* as the intermediaries between ordinary mortals and the gods.

The complex theology of Atenism was built on an idealised state of affairs epitomised in Akhenaten's "Hymn to the Aten". "You rise

Tutankhamun

ruled c1336–1327 BC

A sickly child, Tutankhamun succeeded around the age of nine and reigned barely a decade while his officials undid Akhenaten's revolution. He was later cut out of the records, along with Akhenaten. His tomb was forgotten, and saved for posterity.

Horemheb

ruled c1323–1295 BC

A commoner with a brilliant career as a general under Tutankhamun, Horemheb became king once the royal line had died out. His programme of reforms went some way to rectifying the abuses of power perpetrated by his predecessors.

in perfect beauty from the sky's horizon, the living Aten who begins life", Akhenaten said, comparing night to death, and musing on how sunrise brought renewal and triggered life in a mother's womb.

Theirs was one of the most outrageous conceits in history, possible only in a system where the word of the king was unquestioned. For all the bizarre mystery of Atenism and the artistic revolution over which Akhenaten presided, his dreams came at a terrible price for his people (see box, right). The general stress under which the Amarna population lived resulted in an adult population unusually short in stature for dynastic times, when compared to studies from other sites and periods. Men averaged just 5ft 4ins (1.63 metres) in height, and women only 5ft (1.52 metres). And for all their religious idealism and utopian vision, Akhenaten and Nefertiti had little to offer most of their people. They relied on the existing social structure and the traditional acceptance by those lower down the ladder of their position in the hierarchy.

Demise of a dynasty

It's possible that Nefertiti ruled briefly as king after Akhenaten's death, but their religious revolution was soon abandoned as fast as it had begun. The dynasty foundered with Tutankhamun, who was probably Akhenaten's son and married that king's third daughter, Ankhesenamun. Tutankhamun and Ankhesenamun's childless, decade-long reign, and the sickly king's premature death, left the royal line in a tight corner. Foreign powers – especially the rising Hittites – spotted Egypt's weakness and began to muscle in.

For a few years after Tutankhamun's death, an elderly career official called Ay – who was also possibly a relative – wielded power before being displaced in 1323 BC by a remarkable figure called Horemheb. Though believed to be of lowly origins, Horemheb had forged a brilliant military career that brought him fame and fortune under Tutankhamun. He then became king, largely because there was no one else left to take the throne. However, Horemheb could not manufacture a myth of being fathered by Amun in the guise of a predecessor. Instead, he claimed to have been chosen and reared by Amun, and embarked on undoing what he called the "storm" of Akhenaten's regime.

Horemheb understood the responsibilities of power and the transaction between a king and his people. He overturned abuses (or claimed to), and it's thanks to his reform programme that we know about some of the ingrained corruption of preceding regimes.

Soldiers had become accustomed to brutalising poor people, ripping them off on the pretext of collecting legitimate dues for the royal harem. Royal officials helped themselves to ordinary people's slaves, putting them to work on their own projects. They took the best of the vegetables from poor people, too, claiming they were "for the impost [tax] of pharaoh". Such abuses, detailed in a text known as the Great Edict of Horemheb inscribed on a stela at Karnak, dated back at least as far as Thutmose III's time.

Horemheb ordered grievous punishments for those who abused their power. If a soldier was found guilty of extortion, "his nose shall be cut off". Those caught stealing hides were to be subjected to "a hundred blows, opening five wounds". Horemheb also warned members of local judiciary panels not to accept bribes. In the middle of Egypt's Bronze Age, he was the first enlightened despot.

Horemheb also played the part of a traditional pharaoh. He built monuments at Karnak, usurped those of his predecessors – especially Tutankhamun and Ay – and completed the demolition of Akhenaten's first Aten temple

Egyptians were controlled through the opiate of cult and ritual that dominated their society, with no political representation

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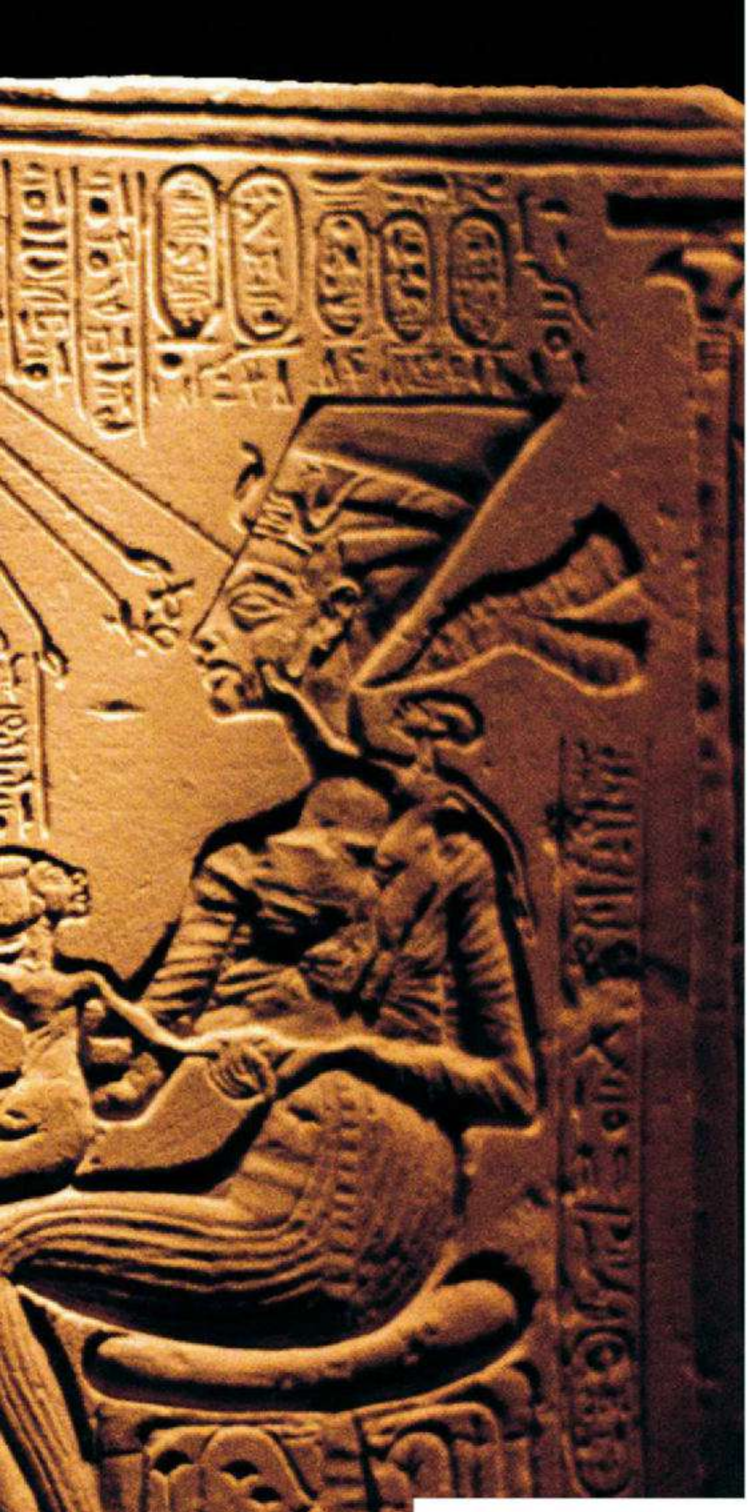

New religion
Nefertiti and her husband, Akhenaten, bask in the rays of the solar disc, Aten. Using forced labour, they built an entire new city based around the worship of Aten

at Karnak. But he left no heir. Horemheb was the last ruler of Egypt's 18th Dynasty.

The despots and dreamers of that dynasty had run an international imperialist state protection racket. They brought Egypt security, stability and a sense of superiority. But those benefits came at an enormous price.

The Egyptian people were controlled through the opiate of cult and ritual that dominated society. There was no political representation, and no mechanism of protest or reform. This was arguably the first great historical era of conspicuous inequality. Egypt's glory days were built on a hierarchy with gold-bedecked kings at the top and the broken bodies of labourers, including children and prisoners of war, at the bottom.

Guy de la Bédoyère is a historian and author. His latest book, *Pharaohs of the Sun: How Egypt's Despots and Dreamers Drove the Rise and Fall of Tutankhamun's Dynasty*, was published by Little, Brown in July

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Daily life in ancient Egypt
Delve further into the experiences of ordinary Egyptians, from pets to dental care. *historyextra.com/daily-life-ancient-egypt*

SCURVY, SWEAT AND STUNTED GROWTH

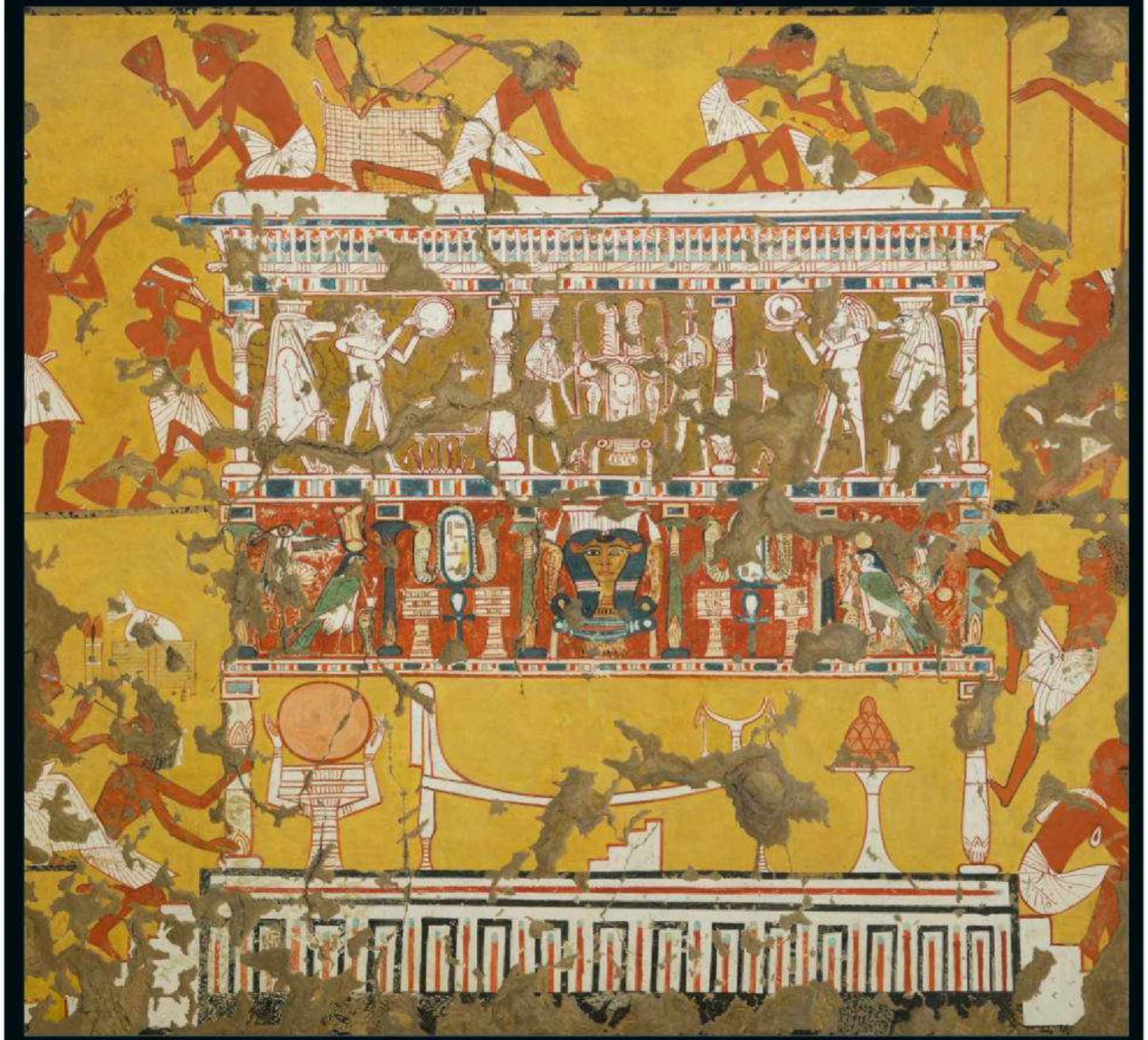
Excavations of one of ancient Egypt's great cities reveal how the underclass paid for a pharaoh's indulgences

Standing on the east bank of the Nile, the city of Akhet-aten (today known as Tell el-Amarna) was one of the jewels of Egypt's late 18th Dynasty. Built in the 14th century BC by the pharaoh Akhenaten as his great capital, where he could give full expression to his devotion to the solar disc, Aten, it was abandoned just a few years after his death in c1336 BC.

We now know there was a darker side to this city of temples and palaces. That's because excavations of Akhet-aten's cemeteries in recent years have provided some of the most graphic evidence for the price Egypt's underclass paid for pharaonic indulgences. Malnutrition was rife, as was scurvy. Stunted growth was common, along with bone and muscle conditions including injury and degenerative joint disease – the latter evident in more than three-quarters of adult bodies. Two-thirds had fractured bones, consequences of accidents and carrying heavy loads during the construction of Akhenaten's vanity project.

A medical papyrus from the Old Kingdom (c2575–c2130 BC), with its itemised guidance for the examination, diagnosis and treatment of injuries, shows that Egyptian doctors had long been familiar with the physical consequences of such work. And the tomb of Ipuy at Deir el-Medina in western Thebes illustrates the industrial accidents that even befell those making tomb furniture, including eye injuries and damaged limbs.

Many found at Amarna died young. In one study, more than half of the bodies examined were aged 7–14; more than a quarter of these had suffered fractures of some sort. Few of the adults were older than their mid-twenties at death. None were mummified – they lacked the means even for the most basic process.



Workers on the tomb of Ipuy at Deir el-Medina, 13th-century BC. This wall painting appears to depict injuries to an arm (top right), foot (top left) and eyes (bottom left) sustained while making tomb furniture

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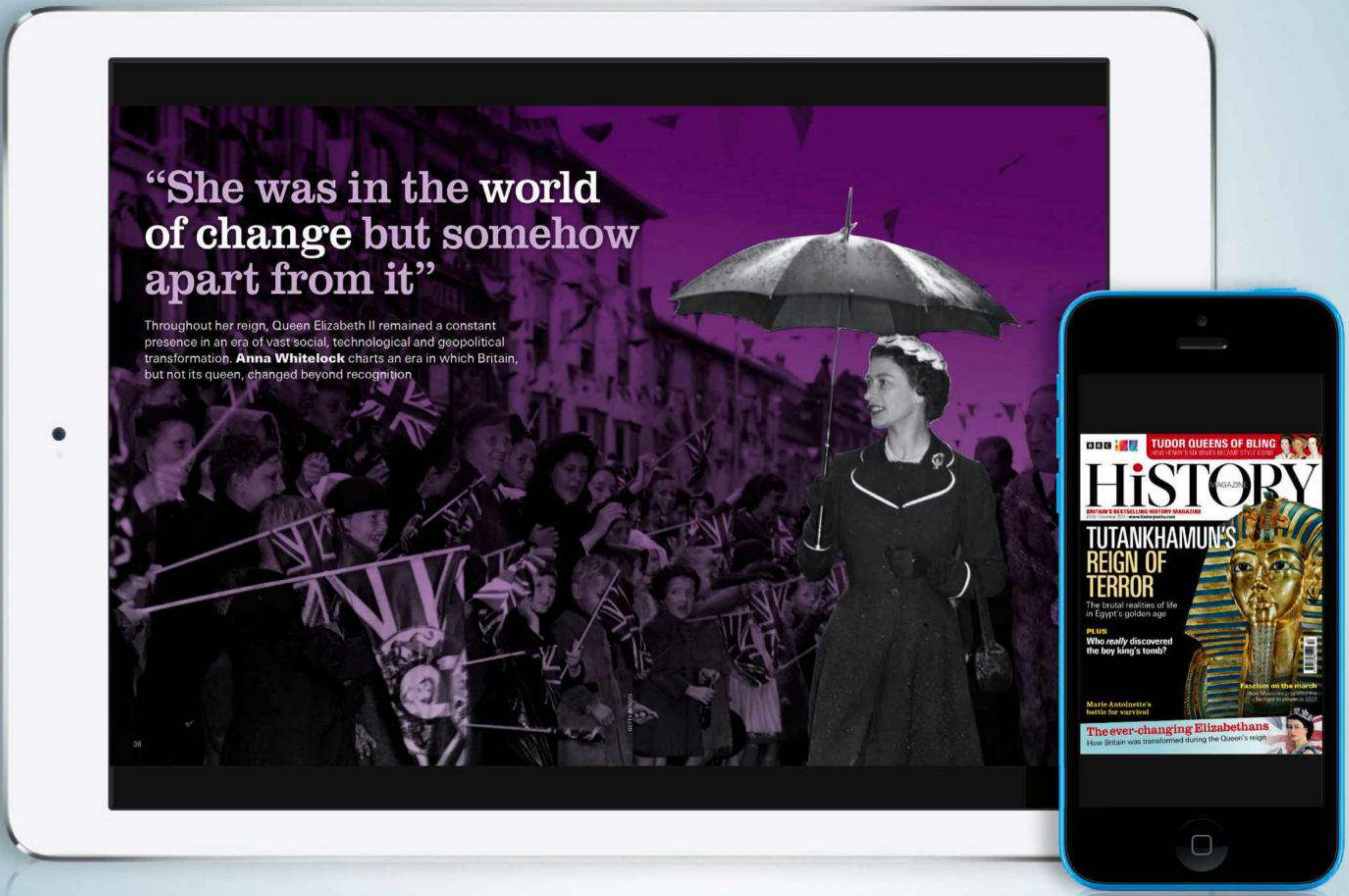
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Q&A

A selection of historical **conundrums** answered by experts

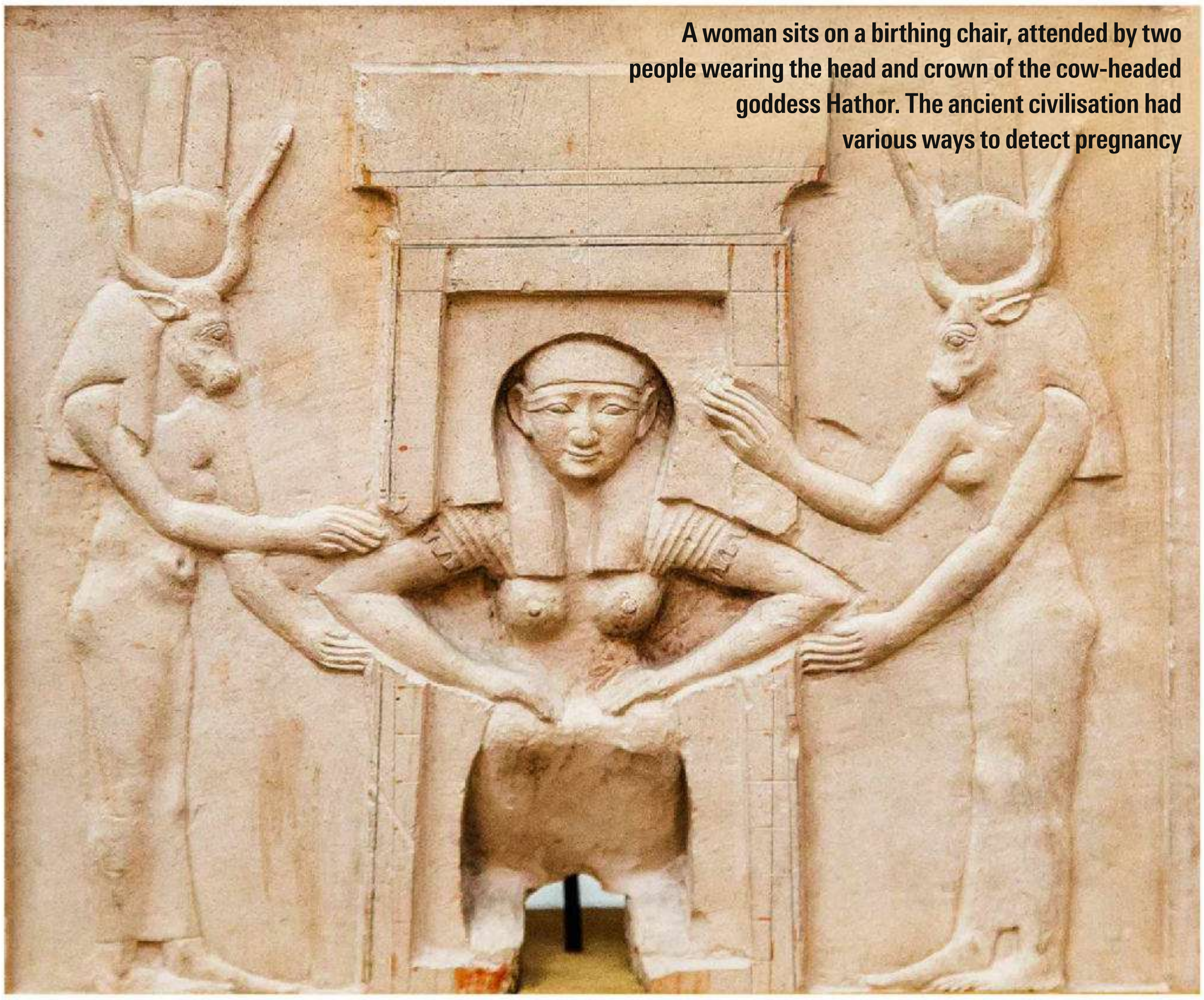
How was pregnancy detected in ancient Egypt?

From about 1825 BC, the Egyptians recorded ways to determine if a woman was pregnant. Some seem quite rational to us today, such as observing if she was nauseous and vomiting, or if the veins of her breasts were dilated, but some were more unusual. The Berlin Papyrus (c1250 BC) prescribes that a woman should urinate daily on bundles of emmer wheat and barley; if they germinated, she was pregnant. If the emmer sprouted she would have a girl; if the barley did, it would be a boy. Another prescription recommends: "Mix a crushed plant with the milk of a woman who has given birth to a boy. If another women drinks it and vomits, she will give birth."

Those who wished to become pregnant could appeal to deities – especially the goddess Hathor – through offerings in the shape of nude women, phalluses or vulvas. One man (c2100 BC) wrote to his deceased grandmother to intercede from the beyond to grant "a second healthy son to your daughter". Meanwhile, the futility of trying to conceive after menopause was recognised in a letter of c1260 BC from pharaoh Ramesses the Great to the king of the Hittites, reminding him that even the renowned Egyptian doctors could not always guarantee fertility: "She's 60!… One cannot produce medicine to enable *her* to bear children."

On the other hand, the ancient Egyptians also had contraceptives, mainly barriers. One especially unappetising pessary was made from crocodile dung and sour milk; others were concocted from fermented vegetable paste or gum arabic that may have changed the acidity of the vagina.

Emily Teeter, Egyptologist associated with the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago


A woman sits on a birthing chair, attended by two people wearing the head and crown of the cow-headed goddess Hathor. The ancient civilisation had various ways to detect pregnancy

The Greek god Atlas holds aloft a spherical world. Many ancient thinkers rejected the flat Earth theory

Was it ever widely believed that the Earth was flat?

In most ancient European and Asian cultures you'll find a plethora of ideas about the Earth and cosmos, and most had us living on a flat surface.

By the fifth century BC, though, the Greeks said it must be spherical. Never mind Plato and Aristotle – the simplest seafarer could see that mountains gradually disappear below the horizon as you sail away from them, indicating at least a curved surface.

The Greeks' influence was powerful in medieval Europe, where few educated people believed the Earth was flat. Yet many still say our forebears thought Columbus would fall off the edge of the world. This myth is a product of the kind of history that assumes our ancestors were ignorant savages.

Pseudoscientific flat-Earth beliefs emerged among a minority in Victorian times. They have never disappeared completely, though modern flat-Earthers tend to resort to conspiracy theories to refute the evidence.

Eugene Byrne, visiting research fellow at the University of the West of England

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Before the invention of radio, how did people hear popular music?

›››There's no one neat definition of popular music – there are overlaps with art and folk music, and styles varied across eras and cultures – but, broadly speaking, we can say that it's commercial music with mass appeal.

Radio, which really took off in the 1920s, was an ideal medium for sharing music. The recording industry began around the same time as Guglielmo Marconi developed his wireless telegraph (radio) in the 1890s. Thomas Edison had earlier invented the phonograph, in 1877, but it was Emile Berliner's flat-cut disc of 1894 – the gramophone record – that made the mass production of recordings possible. Interestingly, it wasn't a pop musician who became the first recording star (and, in the process, a millionaire): that honour goes to the operatic tenor Enrico Caruso.

Before the recording era, people would have heard popular music live and first-hand. Some historians point to New York's Tin Pan Alley as the birthplace of popular music. It was here that the American sheet-music publishing industry took off after 1885, tapping into the booming appetite for songs that could be accompanied on the piano. But we might also look to 19th-century Britain, where all self-respecting middle-class homes had a piano.

Even earlier, a forerunner of mass-market popular music had emerged in Britain: the broadside ballad. At the height of the form's popularity in the 17th century, broadside ballad song sheets, each costing about a penny, were sold in their hundreds of thousands. Essentially the pop music of the day, such ballads were sung across the country, and might be heard anywhere from ale-houses to the streets.

Rebecca Franks, journalist specialising in music

DID YOU KNOW…?

Outfoxing the afterlife

A 19th-century Irish master of hounds, fearing that he might be reincarnated as a fox, built a mausoleum that also provided an escape route for animals fleeing the hunt. According to local legend, Robert Watson thought vulpine reincarnation might be his punishment for killing so many foxes. So he constructed the Fox's Earth Folly at Larchill, County Kildare as an act of atonement – and as a refuge in case he needed one in his next life.

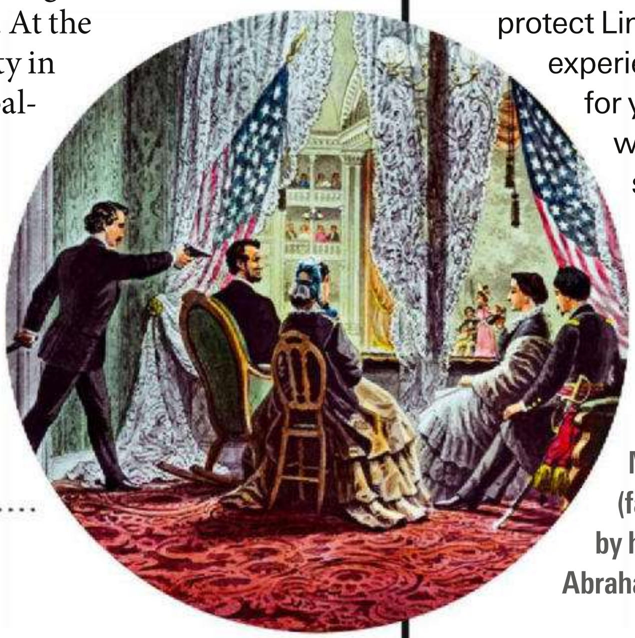
Sacrilegious socialist

The last person sent to prison for blasphemy in Britain was John Gott, a trouser salesman from Bradford, who described Christ entering Jerusalem "like a circus clown on the back of two donkeys". A leader of the Freethought Socialist League, Gott despised Christianity as an obstacle on the road to socialism. He had been jailed frequently on blasphemy charges earlier in his life, and his final imprisonment came in 1922. He died soon after, aged 56.

Survivor's guilt

The man who tried to apprehend John Wilkes Booth, the actor who shot Abraham Lincoln, later murdered his wife and spent his last 28 years in an asylum. Major Henry Rathbone accompanied the president to Ford's Theatre on the fateful night of 14 April 1865. As Booth fled following his attack, he stabbed Rathbone, badly wounding him. Guilt-ridden over his failure to protect Lincoln, Rathbone experienced mental illness for years before killing his wife and attempting suicide in 1883. H

Nick Rennison, writer and journalist specialising in history



Major Henry Rathbone (far right) was guilt-ridden by his failure to stop Abraham Lincoln's assassin

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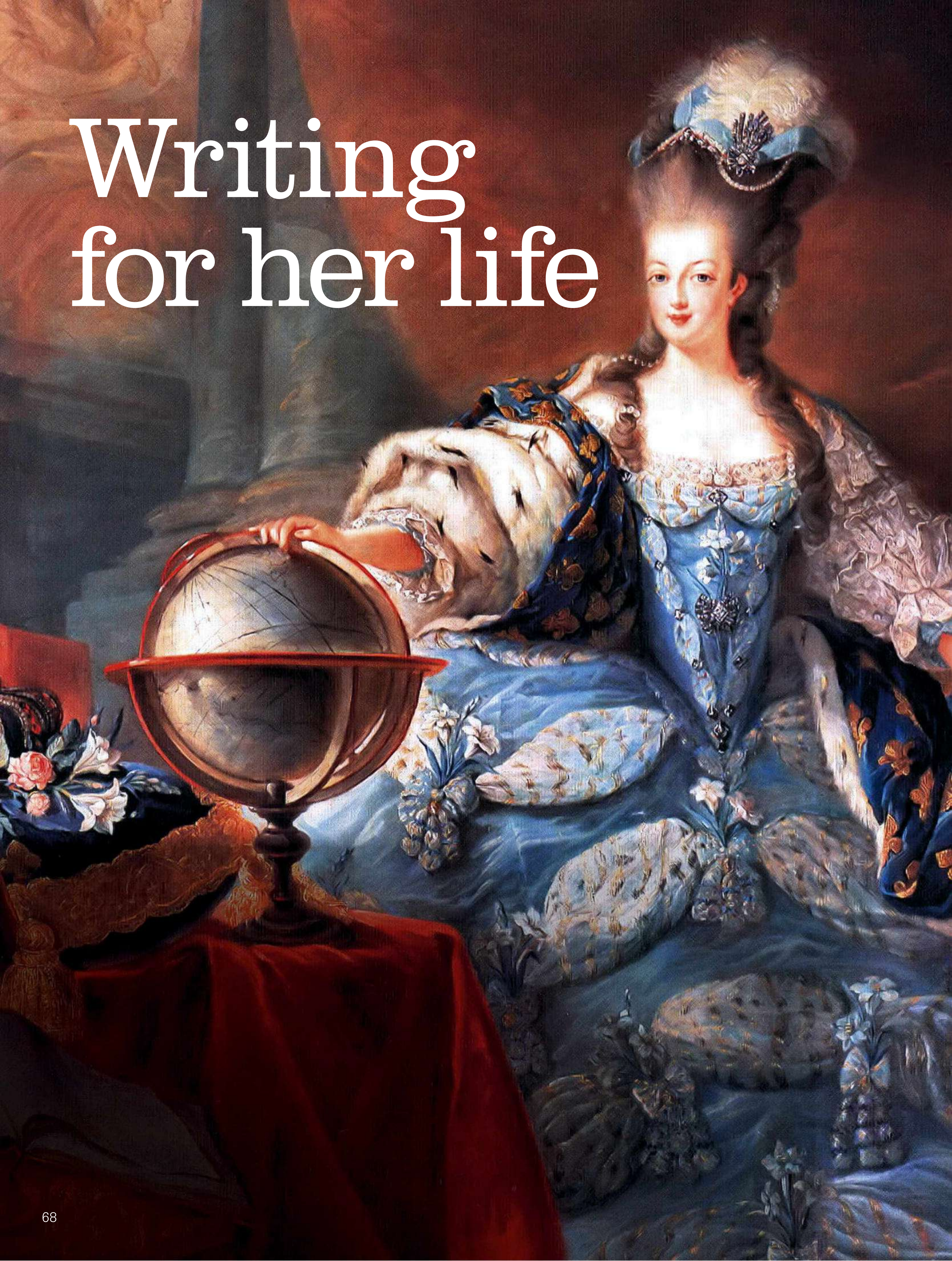
Writing for her life



The tragedy of Marie Antoinette
John Hardman discussed the queen's life on our podcast: *historyextra.com/antoinette-podcast*

Missive maker
A painting of Marie Antoinette in 1775. The queen's letters offer a vivid insight into her emotions as revolution shattered all she held dear

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Marie Antoinette spent much of her reign engaged in a battle: first to cement her position as queen of France, and then to avoid the guillotine. **Catriona Seth** uses the queen's letters to trace her desperate bid for survival

Make a callous remark betraying your indifference to other people's suffering, and you might be accused of having a "Marie Antoinette moment". We've all heard of Marie Antoinette. She is the French queen who displayed her disdain for the plight of her hungry subjects by exclaiming the immortal phrase: "Let them eat cake!" She's also the French queen who – as every history lover knows – got her comeuppance by being sent to the guillotine.

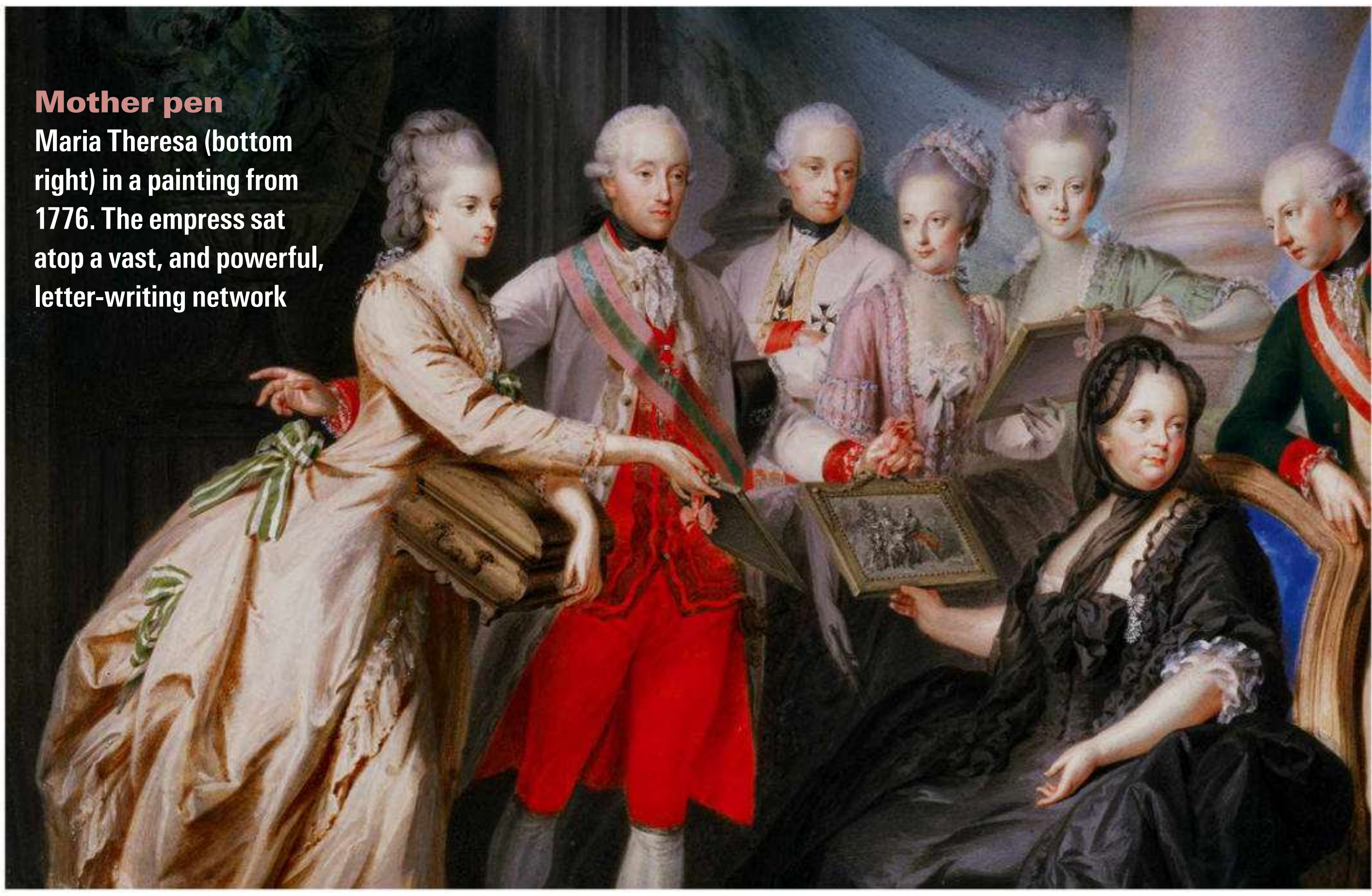
And yet there's a problem with this portrayal: Marie Antoinette never invited the French people to eat cake. Anti-monarchists propagated the falsehood using an anecdote that had circulated long before her birth.

Anyone who wants to discover the queen behind the myth might instead consider the following: "Our situation is awful. When I am really sad, I take my little boy in my arms, I hug him with all my heart, and that consoles me." Marie Antoinette wrote scores of letters during her lifetime, many of which have been preserved. And, as the words above suggest, these letters tell a tragic story. They paint a picture of a woman engaged in a desperate battle for survival as her world fell apart. They help us locate the real Marie Antoinette.

Scurrilous rumours

Maria Antonia, as she was christened, began life not in France, but in Vienna. She was born on 2 November 1755, the 15th of 16 children of the Holy Roman Emperor Francis I and Empress Maria Theresa. Her mother, the queen of Hungary and Bohemia in her own right, used her offspring as pawns: their marriages consolidated her network. After lengthy diplomatic negotiations, Maria Antonia was sent to Versailles to wed the dauphin – the heir to the king of France – though they had never met. Preceded by a portrait destined to show her at her most beautiful, the 14-year-old left Vienna never to return. She was, as Maria Theresa wrote to her on 3 May 1770, "where Providence meant for [her] to live". Less than five years later, she would be queen of France.

Marie Antoinette, as she became known after her marriage, would be adored and reviled by public opinion: considered beautiful and kind by some, but accused of meddling in politics and favouring Austrian causes by others. She was deprived of official power, but armed with agency of her own through her cultivation of a striking image of queenship. She was a fashion icon whose likeness circulated through paintings and prints. Affection,



Mother pen
Maria Theresa (bottom right) in a painting from 1776. The empress sat atop a vast, and powerful, letter-writing network

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rather than social hierarchy, dictated her choice of friends.

However, the queen became the object of much scurrilous gossip. She was accused of a string of imaginary affairs (with men, women and even animals) in an attempt to besmirch her reputation and, indirectly, to criticise the king's weakness. Unlike his predecessors, Louis XVI did not have an official mistress (think of Madame de Pompadour and Madame du Barry in Louis XV's case), and so Marie Antoinette became the object of criticisms traditionally reserved for the king's favourites.

Royal dressing down

Maria Theresa, Marie Antoinette's mother, was a formidable woman, who sat at the apex of a vast letter-writing network. She received direct communications from her family but also reports from diplomats and civil servants. She was never above reprimanding adult sons and daughters for undignified comportment. Even being the wife of a head of state offered no protection against her wrath if you acted against imperial interests.

The dowager empress demanded regular news. The young Marie Antoinette (whose handwriting was awful, as her mother pointed out) was a reluctant correspondent, even when dealing with family members. She sometimes tried to duck out of the obligation by getting someone to write on her behalf, simply adding a signature at the end.

Marie Antoinette wasn't the most natural of letter writers: she failed to make mundane occupations interesting, and, for the most part, restricted herself to talking about who she had seen, what events had been organised and, occasionally, what she was reading. She did, however, confide to her mother that she found some court activities perplexing. Much of her life had to be lived in the public eye, like the daily ritual of her dressing ceremony. Etiquette at Versailles was more formal than in Austria – and women wore rouge on their cheeks, which she thought indecent.

This was a very unequal correspondence. Respect and affection characterise Marie Antoinette's letters. On 17 May 1773, she wrote: "You are in Schönbrunn, my dear mama. Would that I could transport myself there! I would follow in your footsteps during your evening walks; I would be better placed to profit from your good advice and to show how my soul is full of respect and tenderness for the best of mothers."

Until her death in 1780, Maria Theresa used the exchange to attempt to control her daughter's behaviour, upbraiding her for buying extravagant jewellery, wearing feathers in her hair, riding or spending time at balls. She sent conflicting messages. Instructed to follow French customs but never to forget her "German" birth, Marie Antoinette is forever bending over backwards to support her compatriots, the "Allemands".

For instance, in 1782, the queen wrote a short note to the Austrian ambassador, Count Mercy-Argenteau, the Holy Roman Empire's mouthpiece and the man she turned to *in loco parentis* when she needed advice. Marie Antoinette told him of the death of a French ambassador which had yet to be announced. A replacement would need to be appointed and so the queen asked Mercy-Argenteau if he might put forward a pro-Austrian suggestion that she could present to her husband as her own: "Let me know, please, what your ideas are regarding the Berlin position. It could be important for the emperor."

This short missive – the equivalent of a text message nowadays – would have been hand-delivered discreetly by a trusted intermediary. The queen was circulating confidential information but she did so secure in the belief that this served the interests both of her birthland and of France.

When writing to her mother, Marie Antoinette's letters dwell on any hint of illness. Health is central in many 18th-century correspondences. All too often, if you lived far from your loved ones, news that they were unwell would only arrive after their death. It was therefore important to offer reassurance at all times.

The queen noted that women wore rouge on their cheeks in the French court, which she thought indecent

Maria Theresa also monitored any hint of pregnancy. She knew the French crown wanted an heir, and until Marie Antoinette had provided one she could be repudiated. The letters in which the young princess replied to what feels like maternal bullying make painful reading. On 13 October 1771 she wrote poignantly: "You will surely know, dearest mama, of the misfortune of Madame la Duchesse de Chartres, who has just given birth to a stillborn baby. While that is terrible, I would like to be at that point, but there is no appearance of this yet." The queen's husband spent little time with her: she partied into the night while he left early to go hunting. They slept in separate rooms and appeared incapable of getting on with starting a family. Marie Antoinette's brother, Joseph, travelled to Versailles to collect information and give the couple instructions which involved going into minute anatomical detail.

On 30 August 1777, after more than seven years, the young queen could triumphantly announce that she was "in the most essential happiness" as her marriage had finally been consummated. Sixteen months later, she gave birth to her first child, surrounded by court officials. Her body was a matter of state, not just of private life. She would find motherhood fulfilling.

Marie Antoinette was deeply moved by the premature deaths of two of her children. The youngest, Sophie, her "dear little angel", died of unknown causes in 1787 at 11 months. In June 1789, the royal couple's elder son, the dauphin, fell victim to skeletal tuberculosis.

The queen really came into her own as a

High society
The magnificent ceiling of Versailles' Royal Opera, which was inaugurated on Marie Antoinette's marriage to the future Louis XVI

letter-writer during the French Revolution, an event that would turn her life upside down. In October 1789, less than 15 years after Louis XVI inherited the throne, the royal family was exiled from Versailles to Paris, where they lived under surveillance in the Tuileries palace. Their freedoms were now drastically curtailed.

Soon after arriving in the Tuileries, Marie Antoinette set about attempting to reverse the course of the revolution, and to avert what she feared would be a grisly fate for her and her family. Her weapon of choice was her pen. She used her correspondence to activate a political network, attempting to encourage foreign powers to intervene in favour of the French monarchy. But the simple act of sending and receiving letters was fraught with danger. As she was watched closely, the queen went to great lengths to ensure her words were kept safe from prying eyes.

In normal times, wax seals with a coat of arms made it impossible (in theory) for envelopes to be opened without the tampering being obvious. When she was corresponding with émigrés and representatives of foreign powers – which was banned during the revolution – Marie Antoinette made use of tricks reminiscent of spy novels. She hid letters in the lining of boxes or composed them in code. One type of cryptography she practised was what the French call *encre sympathique* or "sympathetic ink": you write in lemon juice, and the page looks blank until it is held to a source of heat.

The queen also formulated polyalphabetic codes with certain contacts. A new cipher, based on a specific keyword, was created for every letter. Sender and addressee both owned copies of the same book. The first word of a page whose number figured at the top of the sheet would yield the key for decrypting the letter.

Armies on the march

During these tumultuous times, Marie Antoinette's main correspondents were men: it was they, after all, who had the power to command armies, raise loans and negotiate treaties. Although she had not had a political education or been briefed to reign, the queen displayed considerable acumen. For instance, she wrote to ambassador Mercy-Argenteau requesting that Austrian troops be sent to Luxembourg, in the summer of 1791, to create a cordon along the frontier: "This movement will give [fiercely royalist French military leader] Monsieur de Bouillé a pretext to get his troops marching and assembled, and to be able to leave Metz with the Swiss and Germans who are there." She also set out the need for an international congress and envisaged ways of leveraging funds and making a show of military might. All to no avail.

Throughout the revolution the outcast queen expended great energy engaging with people whom she believed might help her

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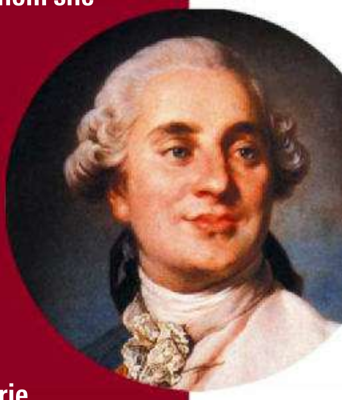
TIMELINE

Marie Antoinette's tragic life

2 November 1755 Archduchess Maria Antonia (the future Marie Antoinette) is born in Vienna, the daughter of Holy Roman Emperor Francis I and of Empress Maria Theresa.

21 April 1770 Marie Antoinette leaves Vienna for Versailles and married life with the heir to the French throne whom she has never met.

10 May 1774 The death of Louis XV from smallpox means that Marie Antoinette's husband, the dauphin, becomes Louis XVI, king of France (pictured right).



19 December 1778 Marie Antoinette and Louis XVI's first child, a daughter, is born in Versailles. Marie Thérèse Charlotte survives the revolution and lives until 1851.

22 October 1781 Marie Antoinette gives birth to a son, Louis Xavier, the dauphin (heir to the throne). A sickly child, he will die in 1789. The queen's second son, Louis Joseph, dies in the Temple prison in 1795, possibly of tuberculosis.

1785 Marie Antoinette's reputation is sullied by the "Diamond necklace affair". This saw her falsely accused of acquiring an expensive diamond necklace (right) that she then refused to pay for.

6 October 1789 Following the outbreak of the French Revolution in the spring of 1789, the royal family is forcibly removed to Paris. They live in the Tuileries Palace.

20–21 June 1791 The flight to Varennes. The royal family attempt to flee the capital but are intercepted at the town of Varennes-en-Argonne and returned to Paris. The following year the monarchy is abolished.

16 October 1793 Marie Antoinette, the deposed queen, is executed on the Place de la Concorde in Paris after a shambolic summary trial.

“I love you to distraction”

Catriona Seth reveals the secrets of one of Marie Antoinette’s intensely personal notes

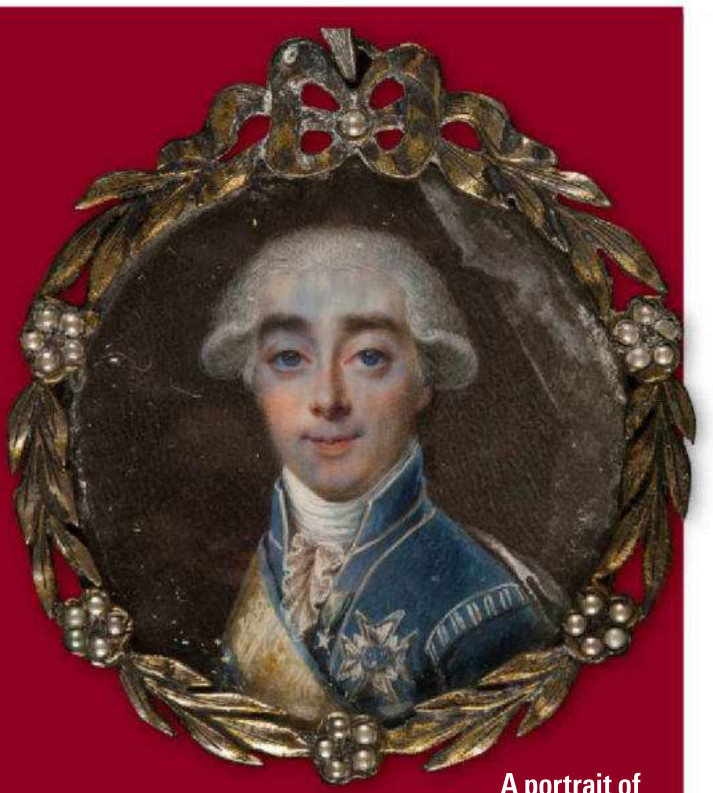
The image below shows the final part of a letter written by Marie Antoinette to her friend Axel von Fersen on 4 January 1792, when she was under house arrest with her family in the Tuileries palace in Paris. The missive did not need to be in code as it was delivered to Fersen (then in Brussels) via a trusty intermediary, her secretary François Goguelat. He was charged with giving the Swedish aristocrat confidential verbal information regarding the situation.

In the letter, the queen tells Fersen about her attempts to send out clandestine messages, and that she is disappointed not to have news from Vienna and Brussels.

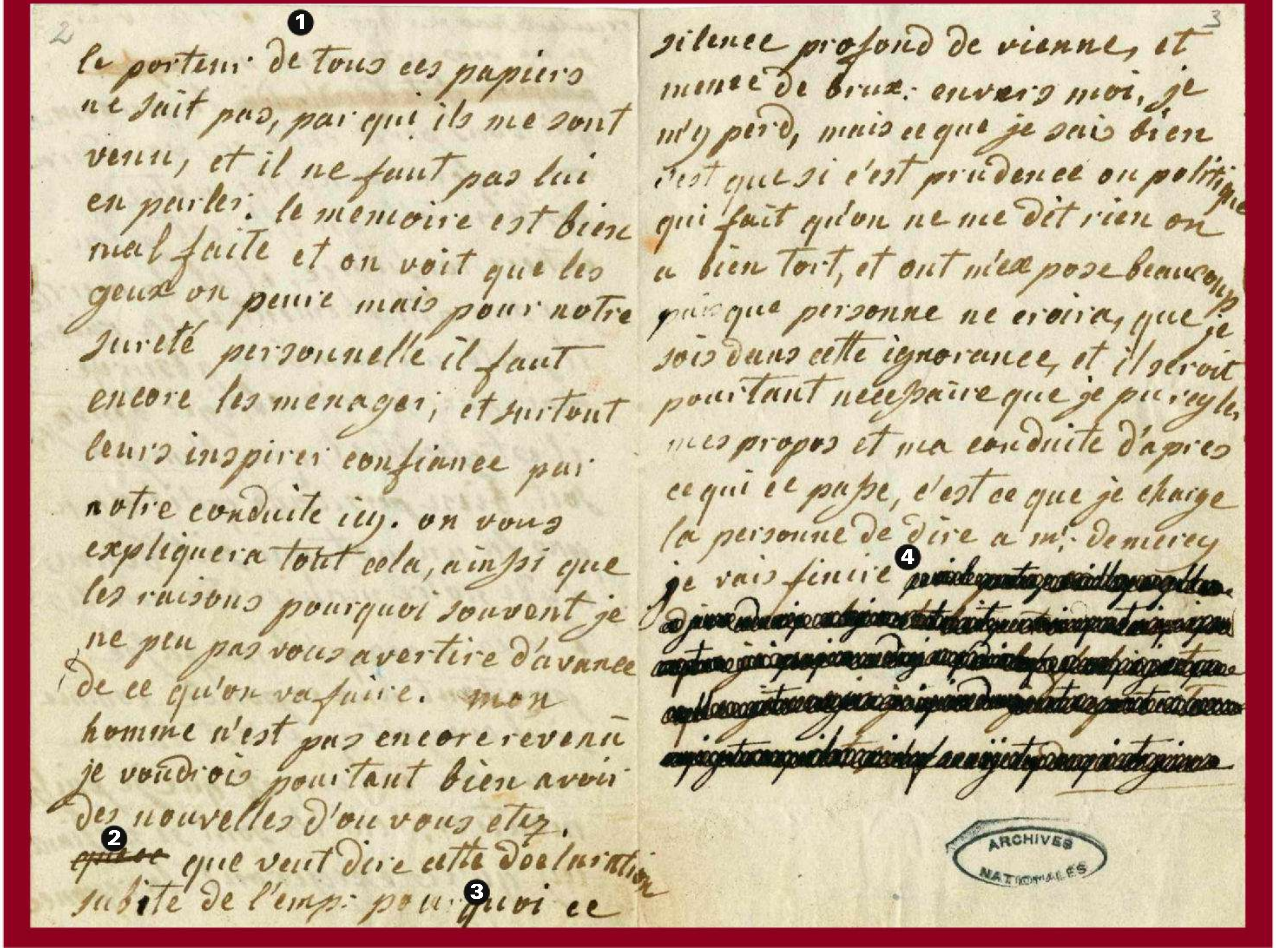
The curled “d” ① and slanted tails of the letters are characteristic of Marie Antoinette’s handwriting. On the penultimate line of the left-hand page ②, the queen has crossed out a word where she had made a mistake. (This looks quite different to the redacted passage at the end.) On the final line of the left-hand page, the quill has been dipped in ink again halfway through the word “pourquoi” (why) ③.

Thanks to a project called “Rex”, which used spectroscopy to analyse the inks, the deleted words that come after “Je vais finire” ④ [sic] (I will finish) read: “Not without telling you my dear and most tender friend that I love you to distraction and that never, never can I spend a moment without adoring you.”

The deeply personal message comes at the end of a letter whose raison d’être is political. Fersen apparently carried out the suppression.



A portrait of the Swedish count Axel von Fersen, to whom Marie Antoinette wrote: “Never can I spend a moment without adoring you”



2

le porteur de tous ces papiers
ne sait pas, par qui ils me sont
venu, et il ne faut pas lui
en parler. le memoire est bien
mal faite et on voit que les
geux on peure mais pour notre
sureté personnelle il faut
encore les menager; et surtout
leurs inspirer confiance par
notre conduite icy. on vous
expliquera tout cela, ainsi que
les raisons pourquoi souvent je
ne peu pas vous avertire d'avance
de ce qu'on va faire. mon
homme n'est pas encore revenu
je voudrois pourtant bien avoir
des nouvelles d'ou vous etez.
~~quoi~~ que veut dire cette declaration
subite de l'emp: pourquoi ce

3

silence profond de vienne, et
meme de brux: envers moi, je
m'y perd, mais ce que je sais bien
c'est que si c'est prudence ou politique
qui fait qu'on ne me dit rien on
a bien tort, et ont m'expose beaucoup
puisque personne ne croira, que je
sois dans cette ignorance, et il seroit
pourtant necessaire que je pu regle,
mes propos et ma conduite d'apres
ce qui se passe, c'est ce que je charge
la personne de dire a m.r de mercy
je vais finire [redacted]

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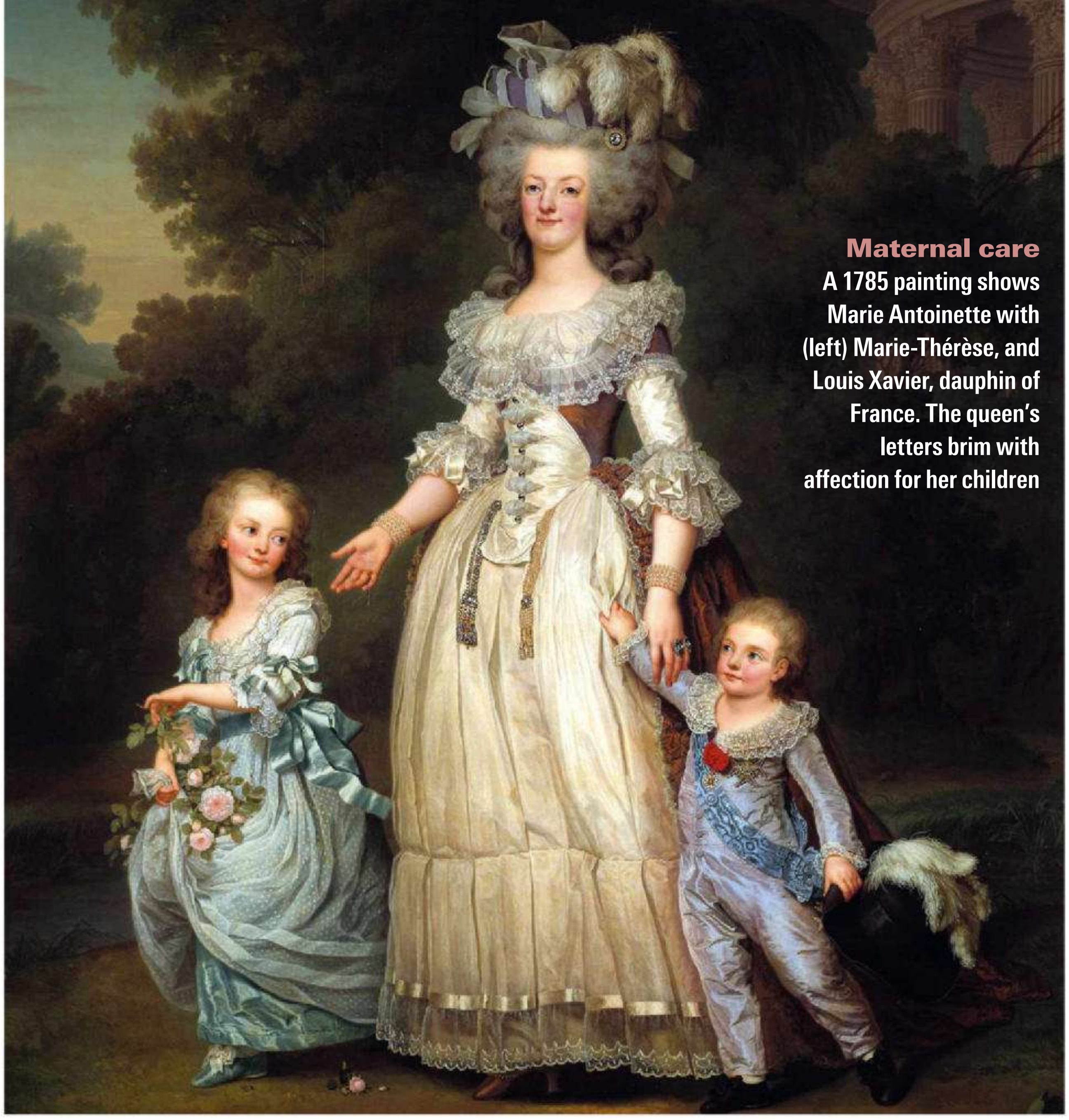
cause. These included the French statesman Breteuil and Count Mercy-Argenteau, who both had the ear of foreign monarchs. She also won over the politician Antoine Barnave, who was sent to escort the royal family back to Paris after they were intercepted while attempting to flee the capital in June 1791.

The escape attempt took place at night, with the royal family disguising themselves as members of the entourage of "Baroness Korff" (a role played by the children's governess, Mme de Tourzel). The king was to be Monsieur Durand, the baroness's steward; Marie Antoinette was to be the governess; and the little dauphin was disguised as a girl. They were heading for a royalist stronghold called Montmédy on the eastern border of France. They were intercepted at Varennes-en-Argonne and escorted back to the Tuileries by armed guards.

The failed plot to leave Paris had been partly masterminded by the Swedish count Axel von Fersen. He was extremely supportive of the royal family and dearly loved by the queen – some people believe they had a full-blown affair. While the degree of scrutiny to which Marie Antoinette was subjected, and the high moral standards she set herself, make this impossible to confirm, she clearly had strong feelings for Fersen (see opposite page). Redacted passages in their correspondence, thought to have been blacked out by a prudish 19th-century descendant of the Fersens, led to speculation that they might contain evidence that the relationship was not platonic. Modern scientific techniques indicate that Fersen himself suppressed parts of the letters which included information about state secrets or terms of endearment.

The Varennes episode exacerbated the distrust between the monarchy and reformers. The prospect of dialogue now appeared increasingly distant.



Maternal care
A 1785 painting shows Marie Antoinette with (left) Marie-Thérèse, and Louis Xavier, dauphin of France. The queen's letters brim with affection for her children

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Parting words

As the royal family's situation deteriorated during their confinement, Marie Antoinette reflected on the precarious position in her letters. That summer, keenly aware that her life was at risk, she wrote to Count Mercy-Argenteau: "It is in unhappy times that one feels more greatly what one is. My blood runs in my son's veins and I hope one day he will show himself the worthy grandson of Maria Theresa." Her last letter to the diplomat, on 4 July 1792, reminds him of his attachment to her mother, the late empress, and asks him to intervene to save her and her family.

Things came to a head on 10 August 1792 when the Tuileries palace was stormed and the royal family forced to take refuge in the National Assembly. They were now jailed in the Temple (a medieval fortress converted into a prison), from where Louis XVI was taken to be tried and executed in January 1793.

In August 1793 Marie Antoinette was removed from the Temple, where she had languished in captivity alongside her sister-in-law and daughter, and placed in solitary confinement, mostly without access to pen and paper, in the Conciergerie prison. Her fate now seemed all but inevitable.

Then, while the queen was in the Conciergerie, a royalist sympathiser, the Chevalier de Rougeville, deliberately dropped a carnation in her cell. At its heart there was apparently a rolled-up piece of paper containing a message which the queen destroyed before attempting to answer it by pricking out a line saying she was under surveillance. We don't know what the note said but a later transcription, whose accuracy cannot be guaranteed, suggests it read something like: "I am under surveillance. I talk to nobody. I trust you. I will come." The message was discovered, and in the autumn of 1793 Marie Antoinette was forced to endure a summary trial on (partly) trumped-up charges. On 16 October, she was put to death.

Her last note read: "My eyes have no more tears to cry for you my poor children; farewell!"

A long testamentary piece, written in the wake of her condemnation, was published a few years after Marie Antoinette's execution. Addressed to her sister-in-law, it seeks forgiveness from anyone she might have offended and asks her family to be kind and thoughtful, rather than to seek revenge. The queen's last note, scrawled in a prayer book on the morning of the day she was executed, simply reads: "My Lord, have pity on me! My eyes have no more tears to cry for you my poor children; farewell, farewell!"

Given that it's more than 200 years since Marie Antoinette wrote these words, we're incredibly lucky that so many of her original letters survives. These missives give us a clearer view of a remarkable woman. And they allow us to trace that woman's development: from the teenager who lived in fear of her mother's rebuffs to the strategist whose suggestions went unheeded by those who might have intervened to avert her fate.

Catriona Seth is Marshal Foch professor of French literature at the University of Oxford

Catriona Seth was one of Melvyn Bragg's guests discussing **Marie Antoinette** on BBC Radio 4's **In Our Time**: *bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/m000117y*

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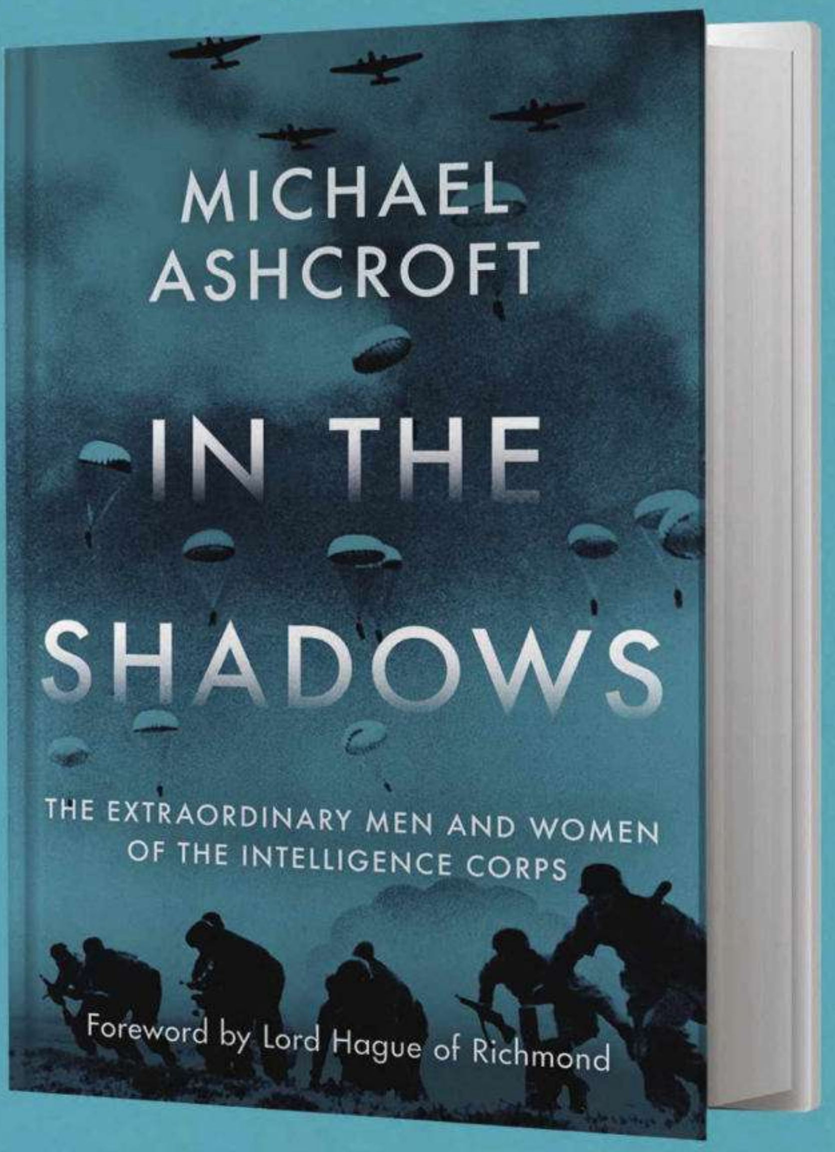
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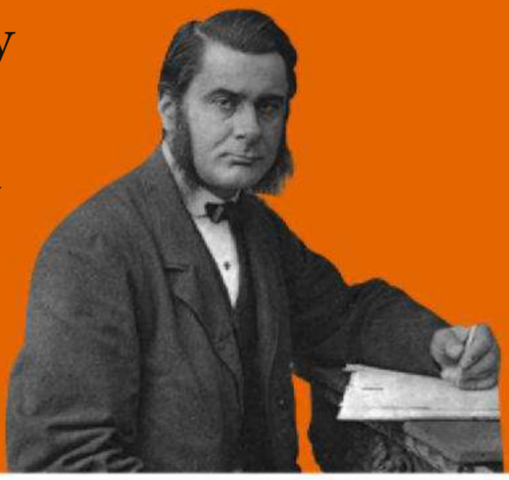
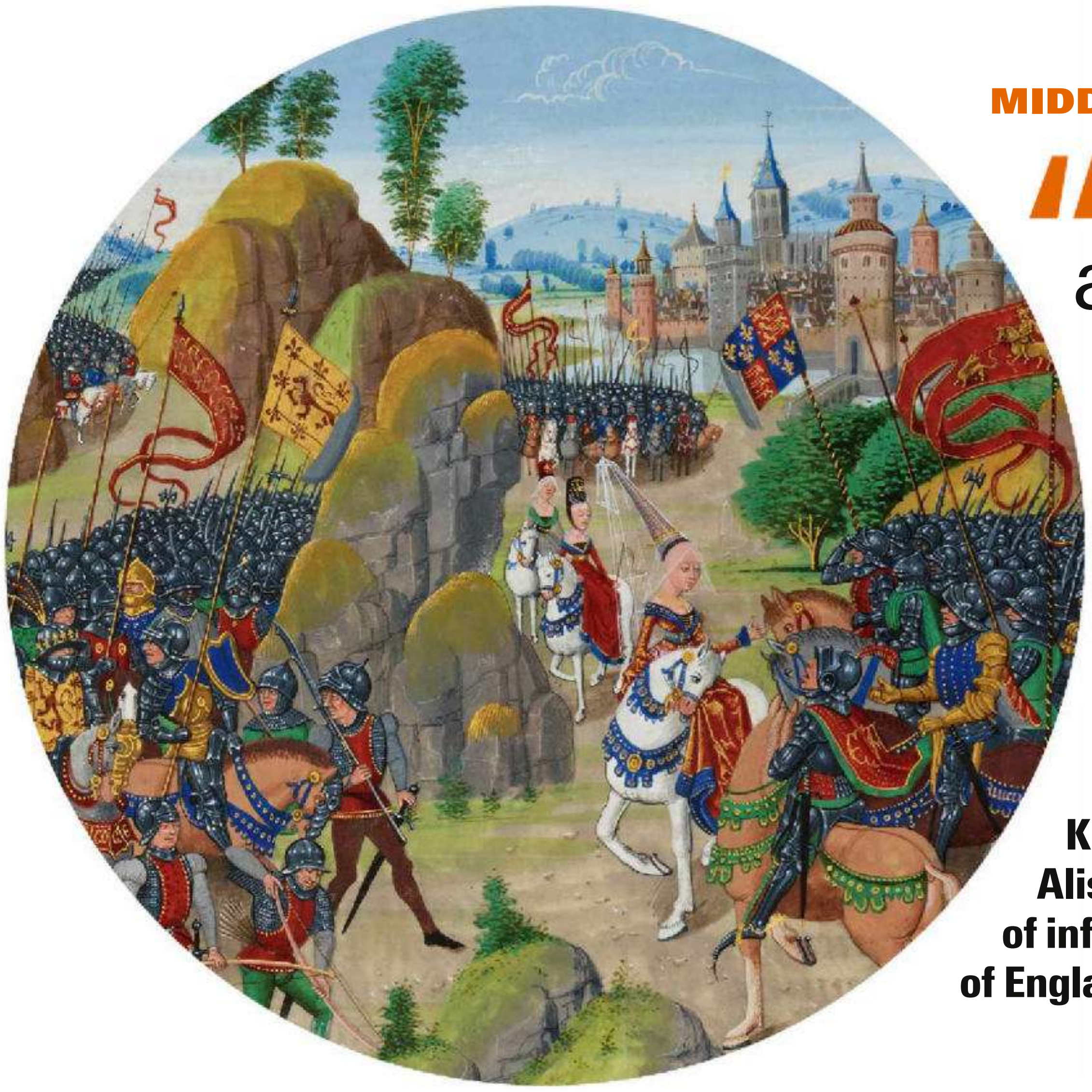
Patricia Fara lauds a novel look at two evolutionary biologists › page 82





MIDDLE AGES

“This book paints a rich image of the lives of five queens, exploring aspects including fashion, art and architecture”

Katia Wright is entertained by Alison Weir’s new study of a quintet of influential 14th-century queens of England › page 80

SECOND WORLD WAR

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Robert Lyman commends an account of one US Marine company’s Pacific War › page 83

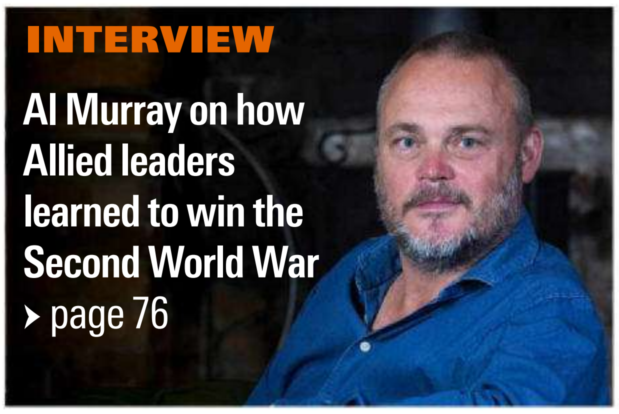
POLITICAL

“Politicians of all parties today can draw lessons from Wilson’s successes – and failures”

Richard Toye is impressed by a biography of former Labour PM Harold Wilson › page 84

INTERVIEW

Al Murray on how Allied leaders learned to win the Second World War › page 76



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"What unites these commanders is self-belief. If they didn't have faith in themselves, no one else would"

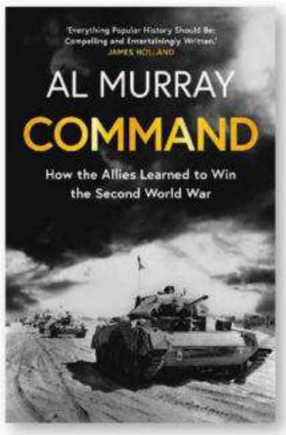
AL MURRAY tells Spencer Mizen about his new book profiling 10 military leaders whose experiences shine a light on the Allies' extraordinary transformation in the Second World War

Spencer Mizen: It's safe to say that when writing a history of the Second World War, you're entering a pretty crowded field. So what does your new book, *Command*, bring to the party?

Al Murray: One of the things that's striking about the Second World War is that the Allies get off to a terrible start. And then, at the end, they won a crushing, total victory. How on Earth did that happen in six years? That's the question I wanted to answer in this book.

The answer people often give is: "Well, it's because of industry, and it's a war of engines." That's basically what Stalin said. And, to an extent, he was right. You've got three Allied economies bigger than the German economy, and those economies were able to use their abundance of machinery to batter Germany into submission.

But the thing about pummelling people into submission is you've still got to figure out how to do it and then you've still got to persuade people to do it. You've got to have the right people in place to do it. You've got to organise your men, you need to figure out how to use intelligence and react to what's unfolding in front of you. And that's the bit I've tried to write about. At the beginning of the war, the Allies were hopeless at all this; by the end of the conflict, they were really, really good at fighting. They didn't win this war simply by muddling through and outgunning the Germans. I think they learned lessons. And I've tried to trace that transformation via 10 commanders – from the generals at the top of the food chain, all the way down to a lieutenant fighting alongside his men on the front line.


'Everything Popular History Should Be: Compelling and Entertainingly Written' JAMES HOLLAND
AL MURRAY
COMMAND
How the Allies Learned to Win the Second World War

Command: How the Allies Learned to Win the Second World War
By Al Murray
(Headline, 352 pages, £20)

So as you say, in the book you profile a cross section of commanders. You've got men from Britain, America and New Zealand, and you feature military titans like Bernard Montgomery as well as less-celebrated figures such as Lieutenant Peter White. How did you arrive upon these 10 men?

All 10 commanders are located in the narrative at different stages in the war, as a way of tracing the evolution of the Allied armies – and how those armies turned into war winning machines – across the conflict. So the chapter on Montgomery focuses on him before he becomes "Monty", the legend of Alamein, the man who's worked out how to beat the Germans.

I wanted to know how he fitted in to the picture in the early stages of the war, when the British were being out-fought and out-thought by the Germans. I think what happened to him in 1939 is illustrative of the attitude of the British Army in those early stages. How seriously was he taken by the organisation he'd given his life to? The answer was, not particularly.

You've got this wonderful anecdote of him writing a letter about venereal disease to his men in which he uses the expression, "Horizontal refreshment". The Roman Catholic chaplain and the chief chaplain of the BEF both thought the phrase inappropriate and tried to get Monty fired. And there would have been no Monty on offer in 1942 to command the Eighth Army if that had happened.

Monty regards himself as a super-professional soldier and he's drilling his men, he's training them and he thinks they haven't got the kit they need. In short, he's pointing at the moon and the British Army is looking at his finger.

One of your chapters is dedicated to the New Zealander Bernard Freyberg. You describe him as a born warrior and a national hero. Yet not even a man of his reputation could prevent the Germans from seizing Crete from the Allies in 1941. What went wrong?

Again, he's illustrative of an army that hasn't quite yet worked out how to beat the Germans. He knew the Germans were coming, and he knew that they were going to attempt an airborne landing on Crete (because the British had cracked the Luftwaffe ciphers), but he still wasn't able to formulate an effective plan for fighting them off.

In Crete, what really matters is a patch of high ground overlooking Maleme Airfield. I was there recently, and you stand up on the hill and you can see absolutely everything for miles around. It's blindingly obvious that whatever you do, you don't give up that hill. But in the confusion of battle, the defenders gave it up. At this point, the Germans have got this strange power over British commanders and, to some extent, the men. And when an enormous parachute assault happens, it's like Martians are landing. The Allies still haven't got the answers.

Is that what makes Montgomery so important – the fact that he cracked the code of how to beat the Germans?

Yes, absolutely. He had a reputation for being vain, for being difficult to people. But I don't care about that, because he was the guy who absolutely electrified things. His arrival with General Alexander in the desert in 1942 [ahead of the second battle of El Alamein] – where they announced that there will be no withdrawal, and they threw down the gauntlet to their own men to win – was transformative.

His reputation suffered after the war, didn't it?

War is a terrible thing. We had to do terrible things to win, and

PROFILE

Al Murray is a comedian, actor, musician and writer, most famous for creating the comic persona the "Pub Landlord". He also co-hosts the podcast *We Have Ways of Making You Talk* with historian James Holland. He says of his interest in the Second World War: "Every time I read another book or look into another thing, I realise that my old and tired brain has only got room for so much."

PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAMIEN MCFADDEN

Montgomery – this abrasive character who would tell you straight if he thought you were no good – became a lightning rod for that. After the war, there was this attitude of: "We don't need you and we don't care what you think anymore, and so long and goodbye." And I think that happened to him. That, unfortunately, is the fate of great captains.

In the book you write the line: "He's huge, he's a totem, a self-created archetype. He's his own gold-standard, he's a movie star. But again, he's more than that." The man you're describing is US Army General George S Patton. What made him such a colossal figure in the Second World War?

He did! Patton wanted to be Hannibal – he genuinely saw himself in that mould. He was this massive, larger-than-life figure crashing about, making a name for himself. But the interesting thing is, that's exactly what the US Army needed at the time. It had grown from being tiny following the First World War to this enormous entity in a short amount of time, so it needed big personalities, showy types of leaders. Patton [who led US armies both in the Mediterranean theatre and in France and Germany] certainly was that.

Interestingly, while Montgomery took heavy criticism for being a bit of a showman, these were exactly the attributes that Patton was celebrated for. It's a fascinating distinction between the two armies.

But as you show in your book, there was a darker side to Patton. You describe how he hit men who seemed to be suffering from combat stress, threatening to have them shot. How did that go down with his contemporaries?

Yes, he did hit people. But there's a lot of subtle things going on here. The American army underwent a rude awakening when they actually got into the fighting. This was especially the case in the Pacific, where suddenly they were dealing with lots of people with combat fatigue or battle stress. The US Army had been screening people and was pretty convinced it had weeded out those who it thought would suffer from combat fatigue. Whereas it soon discovered that there's no way of knowing who can cope. So it can be argued that Patton was thinking: "These people in the army are up to the job and are the right people. So anyone who says they can't cope is a coward."

Ultimately, Eisenhower [supreme commander of Allied forces in Europe] knew he needed Patton where it counts, because he was an inspirational general. This is the point where the Allies are about to enter the last phase of the war – where they were about to confront chaos and destruction in north-west Europe – and they knew the time for pussyfooting around was over. They needed the right people in the right jobs. Patton may have been a loose cannon, but they knew he'd get the job done.

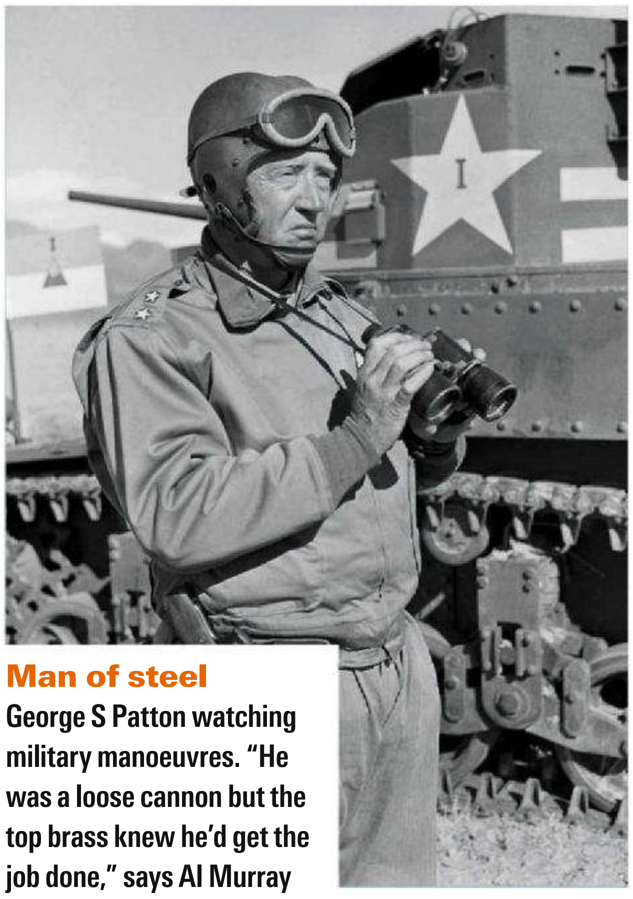
> **"Patton wanted to be Hannibal – he genuinely saw himself in that mould. He was this massive, larger-than-life figure crashing about, making a name for himself"**

Patton was an American, while Montgomery was, of course, British. How different were those two military traditions?

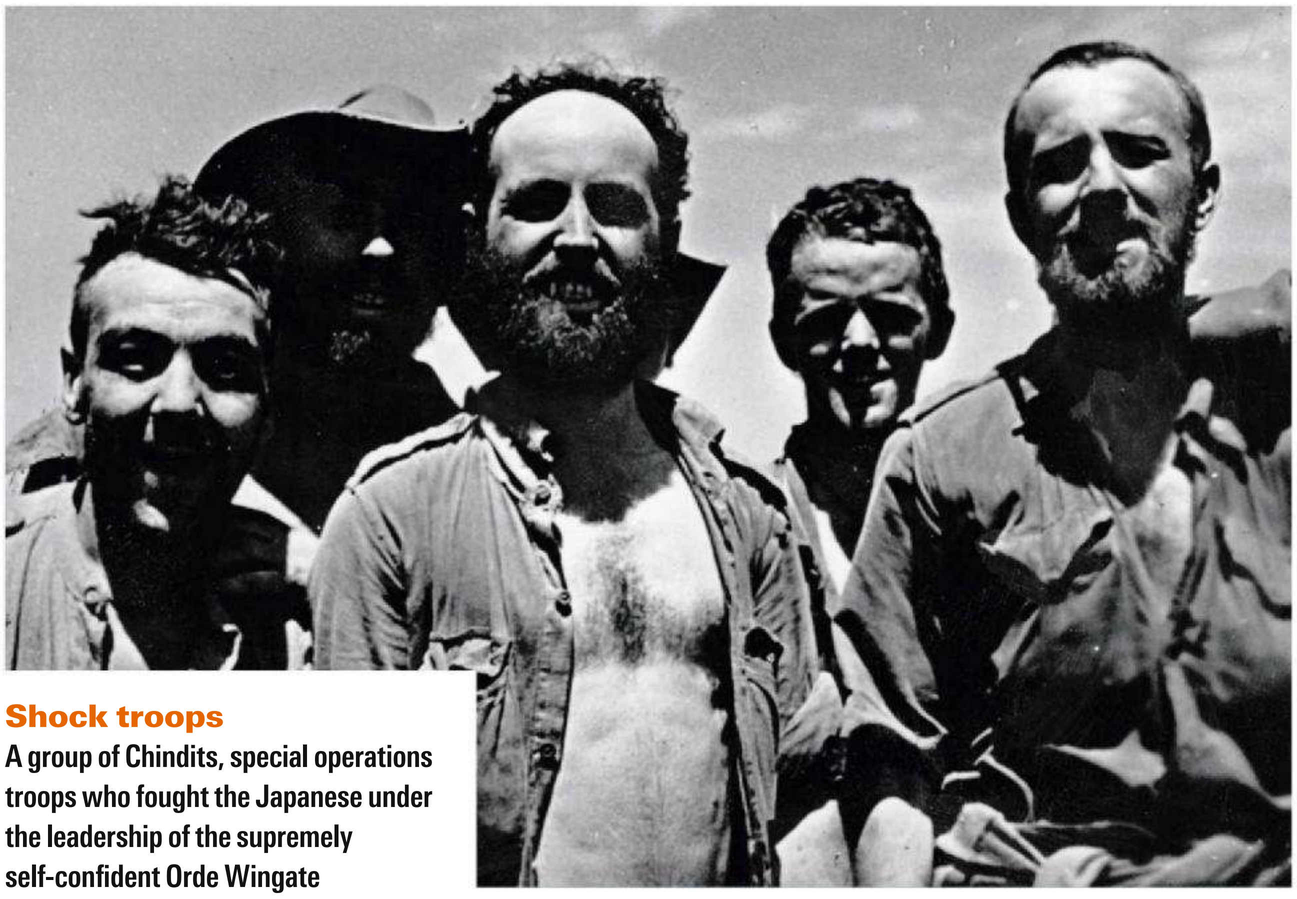
They were enormously different. The British had this problem, which was also, arguably, a strength. Because they were running an empire – which means you can either, for example, be fighting in India or doing garrison duty in Malta – the thinking was, there's no point in having a uniform way of doing things, because everywhere you go is different.

But that tends to mean the British get off to a terrible start. France in 1940 is an example of them thinking, "Oh, right, the Germans are going to do it like this, are they? Okay, fine." And then in north Africa, it's: "Well, we can fight the Italians like this, but that doesn't work for the Germans. Oh, no, we're going to have to figure that out as we go along." So the British had this core flexibility that left them vulnerable. But that did, arguably, make them good at finding solutions to different battlefields.

As for the Americans, what they had was essentially a centralised approach to how they trained their people. It's a big generalisation, but that did tend to produce what was arguably a more coherent way of doing things, one that the British system lacked.



Man of steel
George S Patton watching military manoeuvres. "He was a loose cannon but the top brass knew he'd get the job done," says Al Murray



Shock troops
A group of Chindits, special operations troops who fought the Japanese under the leadership of the supremely self-confident Orde Wingate

GETTY IMAGES

Eyes on the prize
Bernard Montgomery observes the fighting at the second battle of El Alamein, November 1942. His arrival in north Africa a few months earlier "electrified things"

Let's talk about one of the lesser-known subjects of your book: the British platoon commander Peter White. You describe him as religious to the point of pacifism. How does a man like that end up in a book on great commanders?

Peter White is such an interesting commander precisely *because* he's an artist, *because* he's a pacifist. He's a platoon commander. So we've gone from the general making these big decisions to the guy who's got to make sure his men don't move about too much in their positions because they'll attract enemy fire. He's the guy telling his men they're going into a wood now, they're probably going to be ambushed. By now, the men at the top have worked out how to beat the Germans. Peter White is the guy living the risks and realising their plans on the front line. And he wrote a fascinating book about his experiences after the war.

So he was at the sharp end.

He really was – there's no other way of describing it. He lands in Walcheren (the Netherlands) in the autumn of 1944 and then fights all the way to the end of the war, so he gets all the way to Bremen. It's mainly a story of fighting his way through Germany, where defeat is dawning on the population, but the army isn't giving up.

His men will take over a farmhouse, and the platoon will sleep in the farmhouse while the family are moved into the barn. There are displaced people everywhere, including Polish and Russian pressed workers who obviously all hate the people they've been forced to work for. It's a place of extraordinary tension. And it was White's job to keep his men going and look after them and make sure they're eating properly and that they're of sound mind.

There's this really fascinating part of his book where he's got a guy who always runs off. And White's way of dealing with it is: "Fine, I'll let him go now, because the last thing I want is him running away in an hour's time when we're really deep in an attack and he lets me down." White could have got him shipped out but he needs him for cohesion and he needs to show his men that he cares about them in human terms. Because, after all, they're all fed up with it, they're all sick of being in daily mortal danger.

GETTY IMAGES

You're best known as a comedian, somebody who's made a career out of making people laugh. However, this book deals with some of the bleakest episodes in human history. How did you find that transition between these two different positions?

I found it really difficult. I've written several comedy books before, but this is such a different animal. When you write comedy books, you get people saying: "Well, this isn't funny." I don't mind people saying that. After all, that's the first thing you learn as a comedian: you can't make everyone laugh. But with a history book, people will say: "Well, that's not true." Or: "He's talking out of his hat." And that's completely different. So, yes, I'm quite nervous about this book, I have to say.

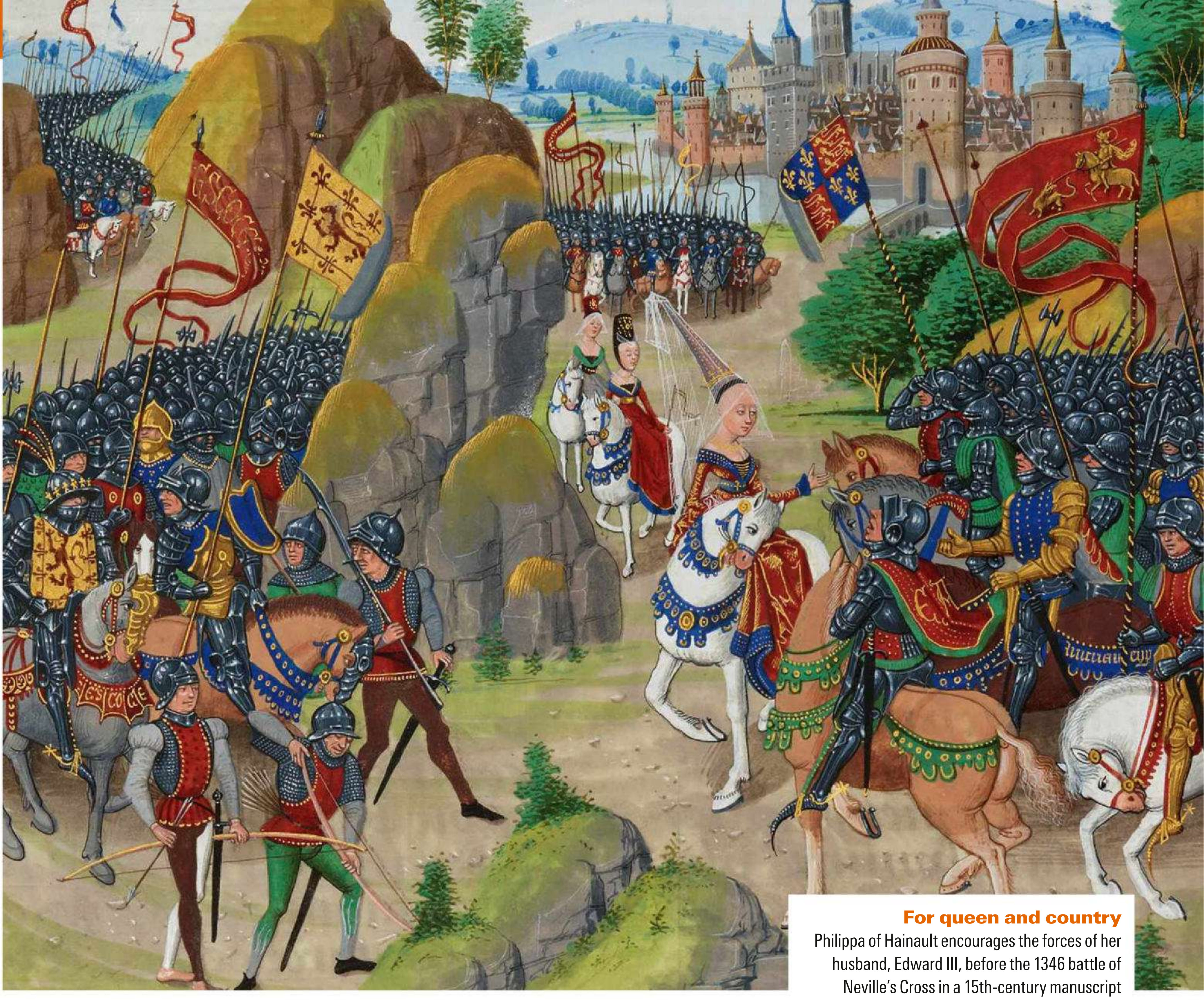
If there's one thing you learned about what it took to be a successful commander in the Second World War while researching this book, what was it?

Yes, it's simple: I have none of the attributes required!

Seriously, though, I think self-belief is a big part of it because no one will believe in you if you don't believe in yourself. This is the strand that runs through all these people. And the pinnacle of self-belief is Orde Wingate [the British major-general who led the "Chindits", special operations units of predominately British and Indian armies, in the Burma campaign]. He believed in himself to the point where he got people cleverer than him to agree to hare-brained ideas.

From Montgomery (who, like Wingate, is widely regarded as having far too much self-belief), to Peter White, whose self-belief is actually derived from his deeply held religious conviction, you've got to believe in something. Patton believes in a higher power – in his case, it's himself. I think that, in the end, is what it comes down to. H

What did the Americans make of Monty?
Listen to an extended version of this interview with Al Murray on our podcast at *historyextra.com/podcast*



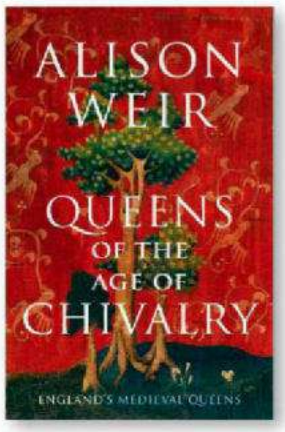
For queen and country

Philippa of Hainault encourages the forces of her husband, Edward III, before the 1346 battle of Neville's Cross in a 15th-century manuscript illustration. She is one of five queens whose lives are explored in Alison Weir's ambitious new book

MEDIEVAL

Power behind the throne

KATIA WRIGHT is entertained and (mostly) impressed by a book examining the lives and influence of five English queens of the 14th century



Queens of the Age of Chivalry
by Alison Weir
Jonathan Cape, 496 pages, £25

The 14th century was a turbulent period in English history, racked by political, social and economic upheaval. It experienced the Black Death, the Hundred Years' War and the Peasants' Revolt. It was a period of legal and cultural changes, too. Edward II and Richard II were deposed, while "Hammer of the Scots" Edward I and his grandson Edward III launched campaigns of military expansion. That era also witnessed key events that set the scene for the period of conflict that is today known as the Wars of the Roses.

Alison Weir's new book, *Queens of the Age of Chivalry*, places the reader in the midst of these complex, gripping events, telling the stories of five royal wives who lived through them. Continuing her modern chronicle of medieval English queens, Weir takes a sequential approach. Covering the period from 1299 to 1409, she traces the lives of Margaret of France, Isabella of France and Philippa of Hainault (wives of Edwards I, II and III, respectively), then Richard II's queens Anne of Bohemia and Isabella of Valois.

Weir weaves important contextual details throughout each chapter, placing these women within the perspective of wider medieval Europe. In so doing, she paints a rich image of the lives these queens led, exploring aspects including fashion, art and

AKG IMAGES

> Weir paints a rich image of the lives these women led, and also reveals their complex relationships with families and court

architecture. She also reveals their complex relationships with their families and members of the court, and the politics that surrounded them. Useful genealogical tables, maps and illustrations clarify complex elements of their tales as well as bringing colour to the stories of these women and their complicated lives.

Weir also provides details that reveal diverse facets of the queens' experiences and personalities. For instance, the author discusses the dramatic and tumultuous events of Isabella of France's queenship, including her sometimes unhappy marriage, her involvement in the dethronement of her husband and her reputed affair with Roger Mortimer, but also the important role she played in Anglo-French relations. Weir conveys, too, the loving relationship Anne of Bohemia and Richard II enjoyed while he struggled with disgruntled magnates.

By sharing such details, Weir dispels some popular myths surrounding these queens. Isabella of France is revealed as a loving mother, not the cold-hearted woman she has sometimes been portrayed as. However, the book seems to perpetuate other myths. Weir chooses to believe, for example, the chronicler Froissart's account of Philippa of Hainault begging Edward III to spare the besieged burghers of Calais from execution, despite numerous scholars revealing that this event was at best highly exaggerated, at worst mere conjecture.

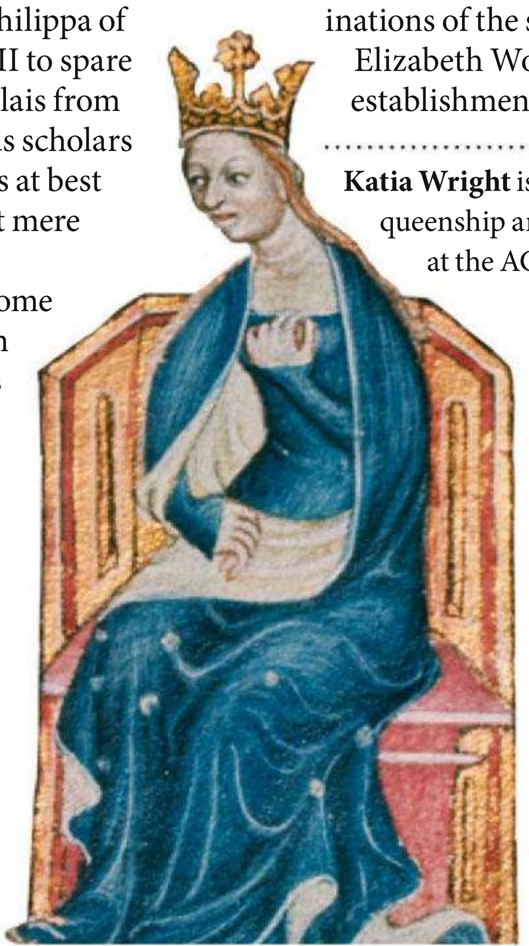
The book also contains some inaccuracies. The suggestion that Margaret of France was illiterate is easily refuted: many of her letters survive. Such minor errors rather detract from the enjoyment of the read for anyone familiar with the period and these royal women. Conversely, Weir handles Philippa of Hainault's financial struggles expertly, explaining the complexity of the situation well enough for any reader to follow. Such unevenness in scholarship suggests a potential bias in the author's research, possibly indicating that she favours certain queens over others.

Weir also gets a little too caught up in the drama of Isabella of France's tenure. She devotes a generous 190 pages to the eventful 19 years of Isabella's queenship, whereas Isabella's daughter-in-law Philippa of Hainault, England's longest-serving medieval consort, is allocated a mere 90 pages. This imbalance is highlighted in the book's concluding description of the latter three 14th-century queens as "learned, merciful and influential, but never powerful". This is a vastly inaccurate statement that undermines the previous 400 pages. Moreover, such a declaration disregards the agency of consort queens who, by meeting the expectations of their duty as queen, played a significant and powerful political role within the medieval monarchy.

The book would undoubtedly benefit from a greater acknowledgement of queenly power. This would enhance the stories of these women's lives and explain the importance of certain details, such as Philippa of Hainault's intercession on behalf of 14 pregnant women sentenced to hang, and Anne of Bohemia's patronage of religious institutions, which Weir acknowledges but does not explain.

As a whole, *Queens of the Age of Chivalry* is a well-written and enjoyable summary of the dramatic events of the 14th century that ultimately led to the Wars of the Roses. Despite some minor inaccuracies, this book shines a light on the turbulent but often forgotten stories of the queens of this important period in English history. It is ideal reading for fans of medieval England and the powerful women who played such important roles. And it provides a fine primer for those keen to know more about the era before the machinations of the so-called "White Queen", Elizabeth Woodville, and the subsequent establishment of the Tudor dynasty. H

Katia Wright is a historian of medieval queenship and assistant curator (archives) at the AGC Museum, Winchester



First lady

Anne of Bohemia, first wife of Richard II, depicted in an illustration from the *Liber Regalis*, a coronation instruction manual dating from c1382

AKG IMAGES/CHRIS LEAH

FROM FACT TO FICTION

Courting intrigue

Philippa Gregory discusses the inspiration for *Dawnlands*, her new novel set in the Stuart era

How did you research England and its colonies during the late 17th century?

The reign of James II suffers from hindsight. Because everyone knows that he was expelled from the throne, many writings about him – including contemporary sources – paint him as a doomed king. It's my task as a writer of fiction to take the reader to the sense of the moment, when everyone was certain that his determined faith would force the entire country to reverse the Reformation and become Roman Catholic.

One key character is James II's fascinating second wife, Mary of Modena. There is no modern biography of this young queen, who was faced with the almost impossible task of bringing her faith to a staunchly Protestant country. The would-be usurper James, Duke of Monmouth also left very limited records. But his troops who survived the pivotal battle of Sedgemoor [on 6 July 1685] were transported to Barbados. There I studied a working sugar plantation at St Nicholas Abbey, as well as Barbados Museum and the huge Harrison's Cave.

What sources did you use?

Mary of Modena left brief accounts of the birth of her son and her escape from London, and there is a journal of a runaway prisoner from Barbados – as well as the big histories of the period. Some of the most poignant records come from Judge Jeffreys' "Bloody Assizes" in which hundreds of Monmouth's followers were sentenced to death or exile.

Did you take inspiration from any real historical figures?

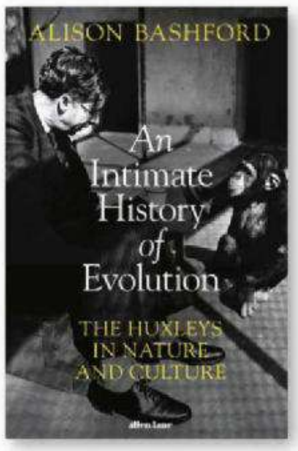
My fictional characters – such as Livia, a manipulative, greedy woman – find opportunity and success among named real-life courtiers who were as mendacious and venal as her.

Dawnlands
by Philippa Gregory
Simon & Schuster, 544 pages, £20

SCIENCE

Past tense, future perfect?

PATRICIA FARA lauds a detailed double biography of grandfather-and-grandson thinkers whose ideas on evolution were both influential and inflammatory



An Intimate History of Evolution: The Huxleys in Nature and Culture
by Alison Bashford
Allen Lane, 576 pages, £30

> Both men would now be denounced as bigoted racists but, as Bashford insists, should be judged by the values of their own times rather than today's

Over 60 years ago, the biologist Julian Huxley declared with alarming prescience that "Man's destiny is to be the sole agent for the future evolution of the planet". Like his novelist brother Aldous, Julian enjoyed peering into the future. Among the many new terms he coined was "transhumanism", the concept of enhancing human life artificially. This is currently provoking great controversy as emerging technologies – digital implantation, cryogenic preservation – are converting such visions into reality.

Conversely, as a scion of the burgeoning Huxley dynasty, Julian shared his grandfather's fascination with the past. The ancestor he addressed fondly as "Grandpater" was Thomas Henry Huxley, the bulldog defender of Darwinian evolution who confronted Bishop Samuel Wilberforce in a vitriolic debate at Oxford in 1860. Thomas Henry, too, enjoyed creating neologisms: his own contribution was "agnosticism", a declaration (at the time, heretical) of spiritual doubt. Initially, Julian rejected his grandfather's Darwinian commitment by aligning himself with early 20th-century sceptics who forecast the theory's eclipse. Later, during the 1930s, he played a key role in reformulating Darwin's original version of natural selection by combining it with other approaches such as Mendelian genetics and experimental statistics.

In her superbly original and evocatively stylish *An Intimate History of Evolution*, the eminent science historian Alison Bashford has combined their lives into a single narrative spanning 150 years from Thomas Henry's birth in 1825 to Julian's death in 1975.

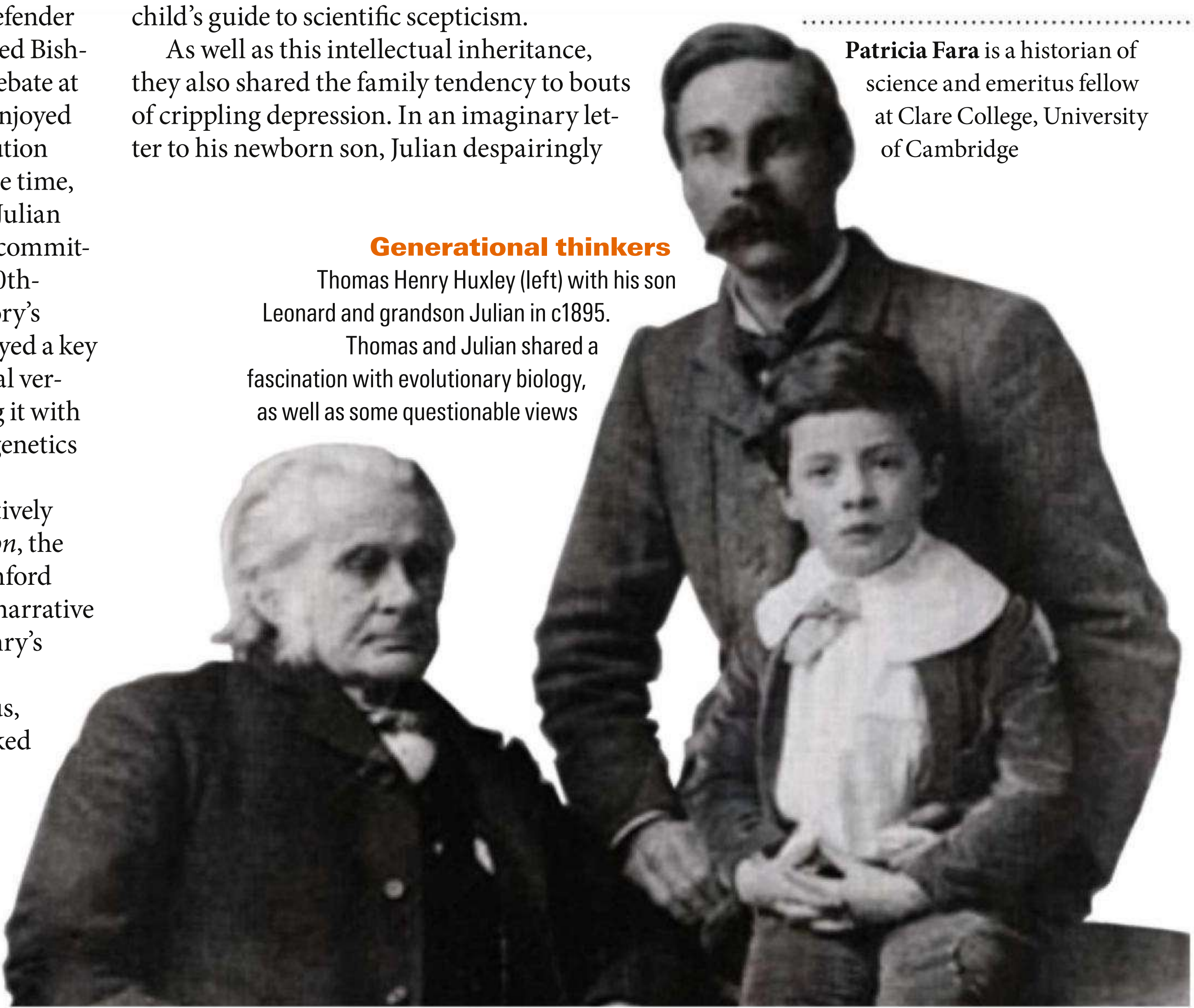
Recalling the two-headed god Janus, both separately and together they looked forwards as well as backwards. But this is no conventional, cosy family biography. By comparing their work and views by themes – Genealogies, Animals, Humans, Spirits – Bashford has ingeniously created a loosely chronological account that weaves their own lives and experiences within ever-shifting attitudes towards evolution.

By the time Thomas Henry died, a few days after Julian's eighth birthday, they were already close. Julian once wrote to his grandfather asking with great excitement if he had ever seen Charles Kingsley's water-babies. In his tactful reply – one of his very few legible letters – the elderly man carefully penned a child's guide to scientific scepticism.

As well as this intellectual inheritance, they also shared the family tendency to bouts of crippling depression. In an imaginary letter to his newborn son, Julian despairingly predicted that "[Your mind will] burn your feet because it is paved like Hell with unfulfilled desires, will mock you with its puny fertility."

Judging our predecessors is a thorny topic, yet Bashford mostly writes with great sensitivity, though she does glibly dismiss Charles Darwin's grandfather Erasmus – a botanical expert who authored a medical textbook studied by Charles at Edinburgh – as a "poet-dabbler". She freely admits that, by modern standards, her two subjects held some obnoxious beliefs. Both men would now be denounced as bigoted racists; Julian was president of the British Eugenics Society. Yet, as Bashford points out, Thomas's insistence on a single human species was enthusiastically taken up by anti-slavery protesters, and Julian collaborated with a Jewish filmmaker to campaign for multiculturalism. As Bashford insists, these doubtlessly flawed men should be judged by the values of their own times rather than today's. After all, future historians will surely condemn the current neglect of Julian's warning about human responsibility for the planet's future. H

Patricia Fara is a historian of science and emeritus fellow at Clare College, University of Cambridge



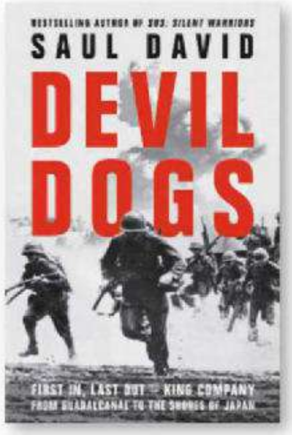
Generational thinkers
Thomas Henry Huxley (left) with his son Leonard and grandson Julian in c1895. Thomas and Julian shared a fascination with evolutionary biology, as well as some questionable views

ALAMY

SECOND WORLD WAR

On the frontline

ROBERT LYMAN commends a masterful account of the Pacific War through the eyes of one company of US marines



Devil Dogs
by Saul David
William Collins,
624 pages, £25

Television executives take note: this book is a huge achievement that, in my view, is the Pacific version of Stephen Ambrose's *Band of Brothers*. A mini-series based on it should be produced without delay.

Saul David's book succeeds in capturing the scale and horror of the long trauma of the Pacific War between 1941 and 1945, for both the Allies – mainly the US – and the Japanese. It does so through the ground-level eyes of "Devil Dogs", the ordinary men of K Company, 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines (K/3/5). The voices of individual enlisted men are significant in this story, primarily because of the very high literary standard of these soldiers. Many were college graduates, and a number left memoirs, diaries and letters, all of which David has plundered in the building of this remarkable story.

It's a story that begins on Guadalcanal in the Solomon Islands in the latter months of 1942, and ends in 1945 with the long, exhausting terrors on Okinawa; the battles of Cape Gloucester (on New Britain) and Peleliu (Palau) being fought in between. These four years saw grindingly tough fighting against the most demanding enemy imaginable.

At Guadalcanal, the troops of K/3/5 – all rookies – were suddenly thrust into the relentless viciousness of brutal war amid the fungal and malarial misery of the monsoon. It was both an individual and a corporate experience. Each man had to overcome his fears and adapt to survive. Teams had to develop, coalesce around good, bad or indifferent leaders, and learn to live and fight as one.

"One thing those [Japanese troops] have got that you haven't is guts," Colonel Merritt A Edson chastised his men at Guadalcanal, as wave after wave of attacks threatened to overwhelm his traumatised, exhausted troops. His exhortation was enough to drive them to hang on – which they did, by their fingertips. They learned fast; it was adapt or die. At Guadalcanal – proportionately the costliest US campaign of the entire war – there was no psychological preparation: it was a matter of direct and rapid immersion. This is perhaps one of the defining features of this war: its grinding relentlessness. It's exhausting enough to read David's account of the battle. What hell it must have been for the brave souls who had to endure it.

This is the primary takeaway from David's book. He does a magnificent job in keeping us close to the strategy of the Pacific War, but this is principally a story of how men learn to fight, adapt to the rigours of vicious, uncompromising battle, and cope with the decimation of their ranks.

There was no subtlety to this war, as is clear from the description by Sergeant Asa Bordages of the struggle for Walt's Ridge on Cape Gloucester. "The Japanese attacked, bent low, screaming death… It was hand to hand in the dark, in the pelting rain… Man against man. Smashing, clawing in the dark. Stabbing, clubbing. Slipping in the mud. Gasping, grunting, dying. Each man alone in the blackness, not knowing what was happening on his right or his left, but holding until he died [on] the ground where his feet were planted." This fight, he observed, was won by marines "who died but would not step back".

Bordages' words perfectly encapsulate the achievement of the men who fought and died in this most terrible of wars, and who ultimately triumphed, at huge cost, against the most fearsome of foes. H

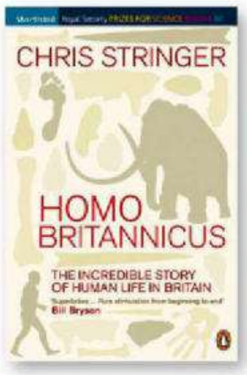
Robert Lyman is a research fellow at the Changing Character of War Centre, Pembroke College, University of Oxford. His latest book is *A War of Empires* (Bloomsbury, 2021)

America attacks USS *West Virginia* during the bitterly fought battle for Okinawa in 1945

GETTY IMAGES

THE CLASSIC BOOK

Mike Pitts on a landmark look at **the earliest humans in Britain**



Homo Britannicus: The Incredible Story of Human Life in Britain
by Chris Stringer
(Allen Lane, 2006)

It is hard to find classic texts about the ancient past whose content is not wildly out of date, so fast does our understanding change. We have learned more about early Britain since *Homo Britannicus* was published, but it remains a stand-out and still-relevant survey, beautifully illustrated and designed.

Chris Stringer, a lead researcher at the Natural History Museum, is prominent both in global debates about human origins, and in directing teams of archaeologists and scientists examining the traces of the earliest people in Britain.

His book opens with early research and ideas about Britain's first humans, and proceeds to detail the fabulous increase in knowledge that had been achieved up to 2006 by the Leverhulme Trust-funded Ancient Human Occupation of Britain (AHOB) project. An Appendix featuring 13 interviews highlights Stringer's generous support for academic colleagues.

Continuing for more than a decade and spawning further major projects, AHOB was based at the Natural History and British Museums. Encompassing new excavations and research into old museum collections, it rewrote the story of early humans in Britain and north-west Europe – which we now know began nearly a million years ago – and the changing world of the ice ages through which successive human species lived. UK archaeology has seen nothing like it.

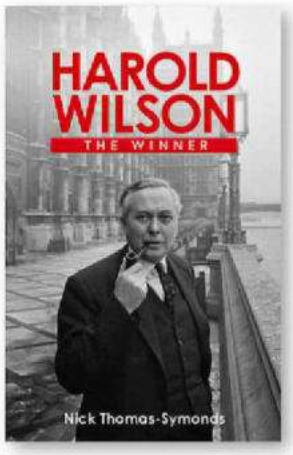
Presciently, the book ends with a compelling and frightening chapter on the challenges of future climate change – firmly presented as a problem created by modern humans. H

Mike Pitts is an archaeologist and writer, and editor of *British Archaeology* magazine

POLITICAL

Labour control

RICHARD TOYE is impressed by a detailed but accessible new biography of Harold Wilson, who led Labour to a series of general election victories



Harold Wilson: The Winner
by Nick Thomas-Symonds
W&N, 544 pages, £25

As the subtitle of this thorough, readable biography reminds us, Harold Wilson was an electoral asset to the Labour Party he led for 13 years, winning four general elections (albeit three of them by very narrow margins). Nick Thomas-Symonds – currently an opposition frontbencher – has previously written books on Aneurin Bevan and Clement Attlee. His mission here is to revise Wilson's reputation upwards, showing the former Labour leader as "a successful strategist, not a lucky tactician".

Born in Huddersfield during the First World War, the son of an industrial chemist and a former schoolteacher, Wilson was a precocious grammar-school boy who won an Oxford scholarship. Influenced by the socialist intellectual GDH Cole, he began an academic career before putting his skills as a statistician at the disposal of the wartime civil service. Elected to the Commons in 1945, he was immediately appointed a junior minister.

Fellow MP Christopher Mayhew was blown away by his intelligence: "I watched his bulging cranium with anxiety as he talked, expecting the teeming, boiling brain within to burst out at any moment." When he entered the cabinet in 1947, Wilson was just 31; four years later he resigned, along with Bevan, in protest at the introduction of NHS prescription charges.

Wilson navigated Labour's treacherous opposition years with skill. Emerging as the natural successor to Hugh Gaitskell upon the latter's death in 1963, he entered Downing Street the following year. His image was that of a cheery, down-to-earth moderniser, with a penchant for HP Sauce and *Coronation Street*.

As prime minister, he managed his tiny majority with aplomb. Ironically, though, the wheels came off after he won a landslide in the 1966 election. Economic problems were mainly to blame. After three years trying to stave off devaluation of the pound, ministers were forced to give in; after making one particularly disastrous broadcast, Wilson's credibility never recovered. Thomas-Symonds makes a good case for those governments' liberalising record in other areas – notably the abolition of capital punishment, and the decriminalisation of homosexuality and abortion – though he acknowledges that much of the credit should go to Wilson's colleagues.

LABOUR
VOTE FOR THEM
REDIFFUSION
PLEASE TURN DOWN SOUND DURING TRANSMISSION

Victory speech Harold Wilson on a telecast after winning the 1964 general election. Nick Thomas-Symonds' biography of the Labour leader is "fair-minded, balanced and commendably well researched", says Richard Toye

> **"The paranoia and sheer strangeness of the atmosphere at number 10 during the years of Wilson's final term as prime minister continue to amaze"**

After defeat by Edward Heath's Conservatives in 1970, Wilson more or less held his splintering party together, and took it back to power earlier than might have been expected. This book makes the persuasive suggestion that Wilson's final term (1974–76) should be evaluated more positively than is usually the case. Still, the paranoia and sheer strangeness of the atmosphere at number 10 in those years continue to amaze.

Other major biographies of Wilson are now three decades old, and this new work draws on previously unreleased material. The key exhibit is Wilson's autobiographical notes, recently deposited with the rest of his papers in Oxford. These are interesting, but Thomas-Symonds does not explain how far they differ from the published memoirs.

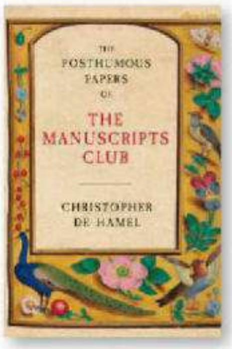
Overall, this book is fair-minded, balanced and commendably well researched. There are many lessons that politicians of all parties can draw from Wilson's electioneering and governmental successes – but also from his not-infrequent failures. H

Richard Toye is professor of history at the University of Exeter

GETTY IMAGES

CULTURAL

People who love pages



The Posthumous Papers of the Manuscripts Club
by Christopher de Hamel
Allen Lane, 624 pages, £40

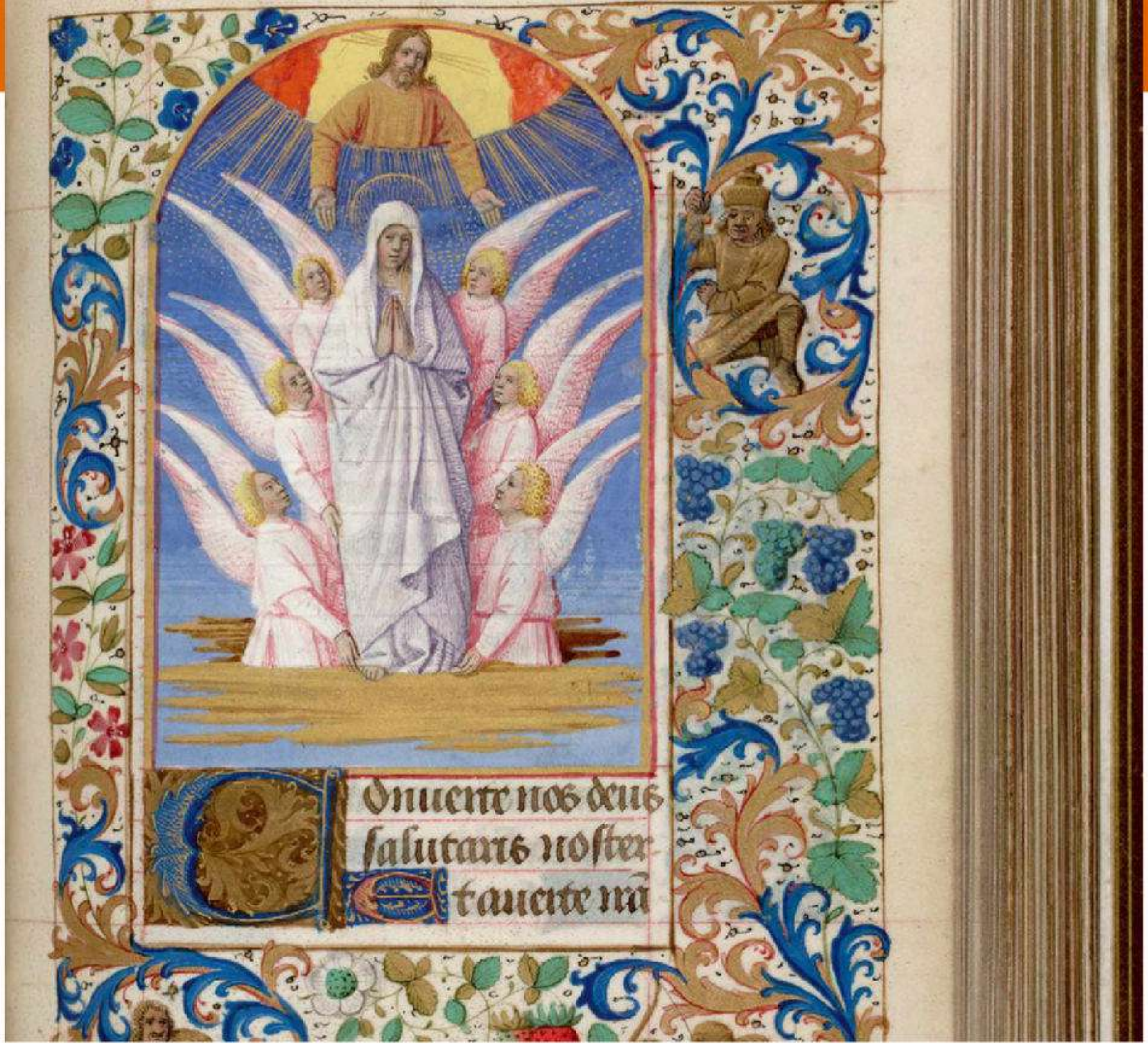
In his new paean to the hand-written text, Christopher de Hamel undertakes a series of journeys, both real and imagined, to encounter 12 collectors who share his fascination with manuscripts. As he observes, every aspect of manuscript production points to human involvement and relationships. These range from initial discussions between illuminators, patrons and authors, to the elaborate copying and decorating of texts, to collectors, connoisseurs, scholars and readers. The collectors de Hamel "meets", all profoundly different in personality and station in life, are bound together by a shared love of – even obsession with – manuscripts. The book ends with an imaginary soirée at which they are brought together, and one can well imagine their enthusiastic conversations.

We are treated to remarkable insights into seismic shifts in taste – what was deemed aesthetically pleasing or worthy of admiration. St Anselm, the first collector introduced here, lived in the late 11th century. His interest in texts was driven by a desire to further pastoral and spiritual care – echoed by that of the 17th and 18th-century rabbi David Oppenheim, whose manuscript collection bore witness to Jewish practice. They stand in sharp contrast to the enigmatic and seemingly delusional 19th-century forger Constantine Simonides. De Hamel examines the intellectual obsessions of such figures, from the pedantic 18th-century Abbé Jean-Joseph Rive to Sir Frederic Madden, keeper of manuscripts at the British Museum, and 19th-century celebrity scholar Professor Theodor Mommsen.

The delight of these people in the exquisite beauty of illuminated manuscript is palpable. My favourite character here is Belle da Costa Greene, private librarian and acquisitor for banker JP Morgan and his family in the early 20th century. Her intellect, enthusiasm and joie de vivre are infectious.

In these richly illustrated pages the reader will appreciate the appeal of manuscripts. These 12 collectors were able to handle the manuscripts, enjoying a tangible connection to their makers and early readers. Few of us can share that experience, but this book fills one with a longing to do so.

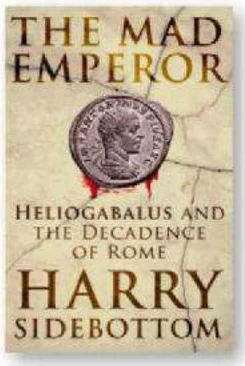
Hannah Skoda, fellow and tutor in medieval history at St John's College, University of Oxford



Sacred text A 15th-century illuminated manuscript held in New York's Morgan Library & Museum. This collection was the work of Belle da Costa Greene, one of 12 collectors profiled in Christopher de Hamel's new book

ANCIENT ROME

Imperial insanity



The Mad Emperor: Heliogabalus and the Decadence of Rome
by Harry Sidebottom
Oneworld, 352 pages, £20

The mad emperor? Aren't there several to choose from? This one, Heliogabalus (today more commonly known as, Elagabalus), was Roman emperor from AD 218 to 222, almost two centuries after that most famous of "mad" emperors, Caligula. Roman sources depict Heliogabalus as a perverted religious fanatic, obsessed with the solar cult of a god of the same name in his home at Emesa, Syria, where he served as high priest.

Heliogabalus was the patsy for his domineering grandmother Julia Maesa, sister of the deceased dowager empress Julia Domna, wife of Septimius Severus (ruled 193–211). By 217, Domna's vicious son Caracalla had been assassinated and the praetorian prefect Macrinus had become emperor. Maesa saw her preening teenage grandson and his widowed mother Soaemias as the perfect tools for claiming the restoration of the Severan dynasty by toppling the low-born Macrinus.

The mayhem of Heliogabalus's reign has never made it into modern popular culture. But perhaps now, the 1,800th anniversary of his murder, is his time. Drawing extensively on the principal ancient sources Cassius Dio and Herodian, plus many others, Harry Sidebottom skilfully juggles what to believe and what not to believe. However, the absence of proper references means the book is not as useful or enduring as it might have been.

The racy story is told with the vivid phrasing and descriptive powers of an accomplished novelist. Thus Julia Maesa has "large protruding eyes, sunken cheeks, a great humped beak of a nose, a strong, jutting chin" – the face of a woman happy to sacrifice her grandchildren for her ambition.

This account of Heliogabalus and his eccentricities (he reportedly sent agents to find men with large genitalia), which led to his assassination in 222, is supported by a rich back story and a fascinating discussion of his legacy. With countless names and technical terms, it's an intense but well-illustrated and absorbing read.

Guy de la Bédoyère, historian and author

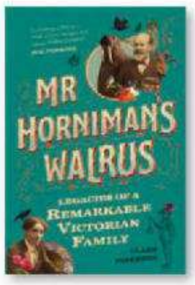
GETTY IMAGES

ALSO ON THE BOOKSHELF

WORDS BY **RHIANNON DAVIES** & **MATT ELTON**

VICTORIAN

Mr Horniman's Walrus
by Clare Paterson
(Michael O'Mara Books, 272 pages, £20)



Free-spirited family

The Horniman family first rose to prominence when its patriarch, John, founded a tea empire in the 1820s. However, his descendants took more eccentric paths: his son, Frederick, bought a giant stuffed walrus to draw curious visitors to his Horniman Museum, and his granddaughter Annie became an occultist leader. In this readable biography, Clare Paterson explores the family's fascinating stories.

FICTION

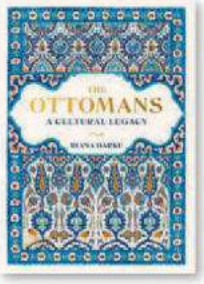
Euphoria
by Elin Cullhed; translated by Jennifer Hayashida
(Canongate, 304 pages, £16.99)

A life undone

At the start of her compelling new novel, Elin Cullhed explains that she feels a kinship with Sylvia Plath: both are mothers to young children, married to fellow writers, and trying to carve out time for their own creative pursuits. This inspired Cullhed to reimagine the last year of Plath's life in vivid, sometimes graphic, detail – from the collapse of her marriage to the creation of some of her most powerful poems.

OTTOMANS

The Ottomans: A Cultural Legacy
by Diana Darke
(Thames & Hudson, 288 pages, £30)

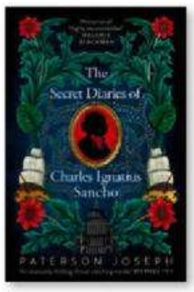


Culture shock

This year marks the centenary of the collapse of the Ottoman empire, which brought a 600-year chapter of global history to a close. Diana Darke uses this as an opportunity to reflect on the empire from a cultural perspective, taking in topics as diverse as the surgical instruments that the Ottomans invented and the poetry penned by sultans. Sumptuous illustrations bring her text to life.

FICTION

The Secret Diaries of Charles Ignatius Sancho
by Paterson Joseph
(Dialogue Books, 432 pages, £16.99)



The write path

The acclaimed actor Paterson Joseph (*Peep Show*, *Noughts and Crosses*) has turned his hand to historical fiction with this bold debut novel. Retracing the life of abolitionist Charles Ignatius Sancho, the narrative explores the dizzying highs and hellish lows of Sancho's storied life, from the horrors of the middle passage to his quest to become literate and share his experiences with the world.

SOCIAL

Sick Note: A History of the British Welfare State
by Gareth Millward
(Oxford University Press, 256 pages, £30)

Medical history

How do doctors assess who is healthy enough to work, and what impacts do those decisions have on communities and workplaces? Those are the questions at the heart of this fascinating book, which examines the welfare state through the prism of the "sick note". From surgeries to the corridors of power, it explores the ways in which wellness and welfare have been viewed from the 1940s onward.

VISUAL

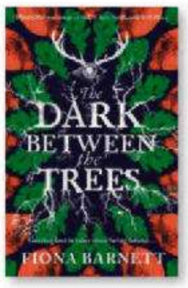
Queen Elizabeth II: A Celebration of her Life and Reign in Pictures
by David Souden
(BBC Books, 240 pages, £22)

A royal tribute

This visual history pays tribute to the late Queen Elizabeth II through a curated selection of almost 200 photographs, many of which are drawn from the BBC's extensive archives. Spanning the full length of the Queen's life, from her first days to this year's platinum jubilee, the images are accompanied throughout by expert commentary from curator and historian David Souden.

FICTION

The Dark Between the Trees
by Fiona Barnett
(Solaris, 304 pages, £15.99)

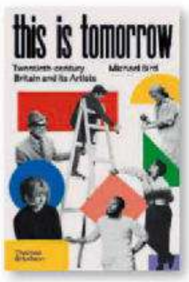


Into the woods

In the mood for some spooky historical fiction as the season turns and the shadows lengthen? Fiona Barnett's novel follows five modern-day experts as they head into a forest in northern England to discover what happened to a band of civil war soldiers who vanished mysteriously in 1643. Unfortunately for the soldiers, an eldritch force was rumoured to stalk the wood. Now the experts may face the same fate…

CULTURAL

This is Tomorrow: Twentieth-Century Britain and its Artists
by Michael Bird
(Thames & Hudson, 352 pages, £30)

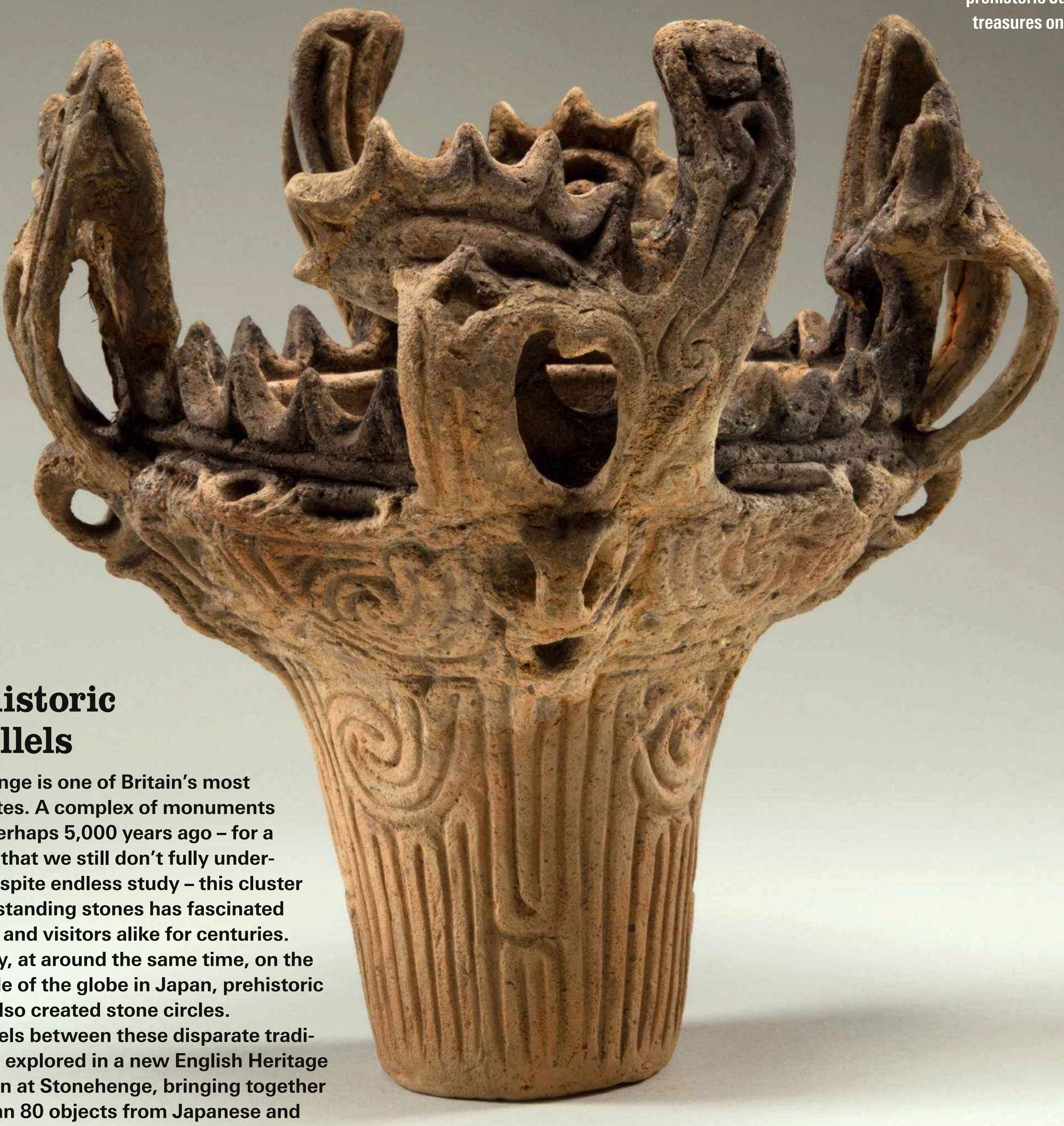


Art decades

Historian and curator Michael Bird here chronicles the development of British art across the long 20th century through the lives of some of its key artists. By exploring the ways in which their work was influenced by class, injustice and war, he also offers a creative-tinged history of the wider forces that buffeted the nation – from the end of the Victorian era through to the heyday of the Young British Artists. H

DIARY By **Jonathan Wright, Rhiannon Davies** and **Samantha Nott**
PODCAST **The perils of interpreting**
EXPLORE **Bury St Edmunds,** Suffolk

ENCOUNTERS



A flame pot, ornately shaped and decorated to resemble a raging fire – one of many prehistoric Japanese treasures on display

VISIT

Prehistoric parallels

Stonehenge is one of Britain's most iconic sites. A complex of monuments begun perhaps 5,000 years ago – for a purpose that we still don't fully understand despite endless study – this cluster of huge standing stones has fascinated scholars and visitors alike for centuries. Curiously, at around the same time, on the other side of the globe in Japan, prehistoric people also created stone circles.

Parallels between these disparate traditions are explored in a new English Heritage exhibition at Stonehenge, bringing together more than 80 objects from Japanese and British prehistory. Dogu – finely carved Japanese clay figurines thought to depict earth goddesses or spirits – are displayed, as well as flame pots and other cultural treasures from these east Asian islands.

Circles of Stone: Stonehenge and Prehistoric Japan
Stonehenge, Wiltshire / Until August 2023 / Pre-booking advised /
english-heritage.org.uk

AGAOKA CITY-TADAHIRO OGAWA

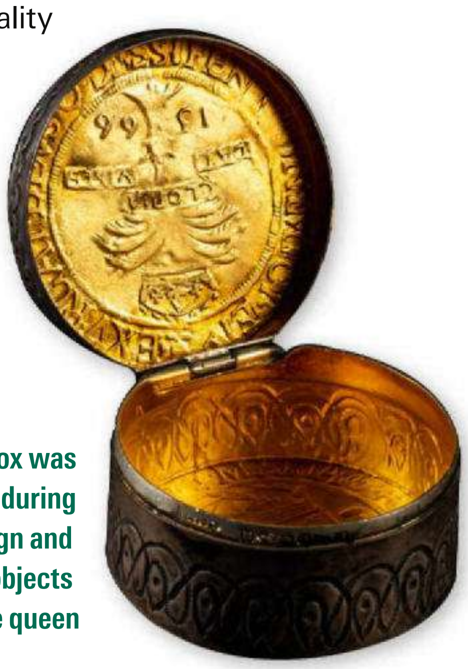
VISIT

Queen of culture

How do you solve a problem like Mary, Queen of Scots? This question vexed her cousin, Elizabeth I, and Protestant Scottish lords including Mary's half-brother, the Earl of Moray. At the end a lonely figure, Mary was cast out by her people and finally executed by her fellow monarch – creating a tragic story that has endured for centuries.

Mary's cultural legacy is now the focus of a new exhibition at The Hunterian. Gathering together artefacts including medals, books and art, it considers how different generations have viewed her – and how these perceptions are connected to wider themes of gender, sexuality and monarchy.

The Afterlife of Mary Queen of Scots
The Hunterian, Glasgow /
Until 5 February 2023 /
gla.ac.uk/hunterian



This 19th-century snuff box was inspired by coins minted during Mary, Queen of Scots' reign and was part of a trend of objects memorialising the queen

A rhino and a warthog feed after arriving in England in 1947. The warthog, named Charlie, later lived at Bristol Zoo

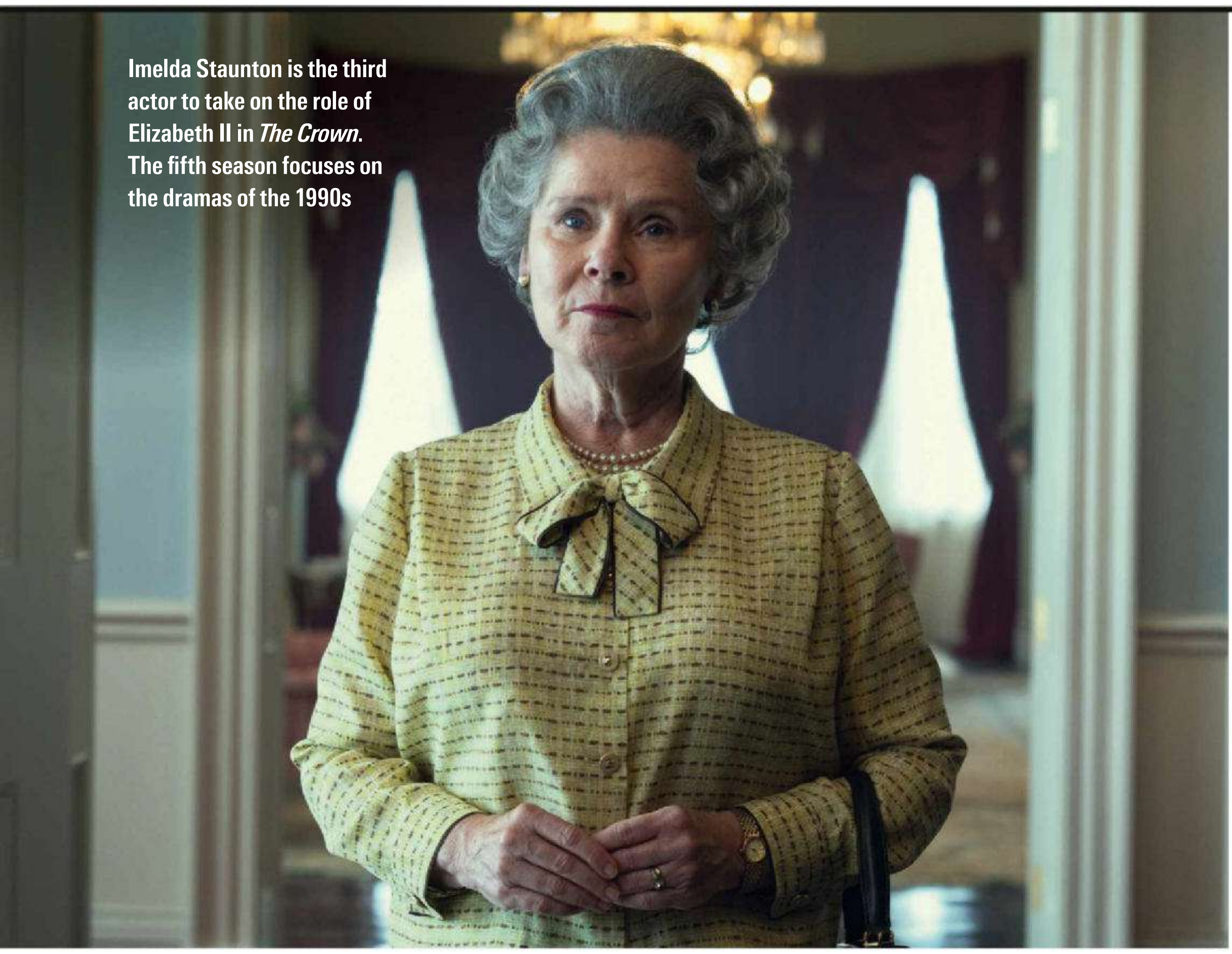
LISTEN

Zoo quest

In September 2022, Bristol Zoo closed its doors for the last time. Founded in 1835, it was the world's oldest provincial zoo; Isambard Kingdom Brunel was once a shareholder. It will reopen at an out-of-town site, the Wild Place Project, in 2024.

What does all this tell us about the history of zoos, and their future? These subjects are tackled in a five-part Radio 4 series tracing the evolution of zoos back to the ancient world, when monarchs used animals as symbols of power. It also brings the story up to the present day, when the role of zoos is under scrutiny – are they arks for endangered species or animal prisons?

Uncaged
BBC Radio 4 & BBC Sounds / Late October



Imelda Staunton is the third actor to take on the role of Elizabeth II in *The Crown*. The fifth season focuses on the dramas of the 1990s

WATCH

Modern family

Blockbuster drama *The Crown*, which looks set to return despite the death of Elizabeth II, is about to embark on a fifth and penultimate series heading into the 1990s. Events pick up with the Queen (now played by Imelda Staunton) reflecting on how the world has changed since she ascended to the throne nearly 40 years previously, before mass television and when Britain was still an imperial power.

But it's not just geopolitical events, such as the aftermath of the fall of the Berlin Wall, that are preoccupying Elizabeth Windsor – closer to home, the marriage of Prince Charles (Dominic West) and Princess Diana (Elizabeth Debicki) is disintegrating. Other new cast members include Jonathan Pryce as Prince Philip.

The Crown
Netflix / Streaming from Wednesday 9 November

TOPFOTO/NETFLIX

Chaske Spencer and Emily Blunt star as a Native American man and an aristocratic Englishwoman thrown together by their thirst for revenge

BBC/GETTY IMAGES

WATCH

Lady vengeance

Revenge is a dangerous obsession. Such is the idea that underpins *The English*, the latest six-part offering from writer and director Hugo Blick (*The Honourable Woman, Black Earth Rising*). The series stars Emily Blunt as Cornelia Locke, an aristocratic Englishwoman who in 1890 heads into the American West to track down the man she blames for the death of her son.

In a drama that also deals with racism, love and the abuse of power, Locke's companion for much of her journey is Eli Whipp (Chaske Spencer), a former cavalry scout who is by birth a member of the Pawnee Nation. The two characters are linked in ways that begin to become clear only when, in the new town of Hoxem, Wyoming, the local sheriff, Robert Marshall (Stephen Rea), investigates a series of macabre murders.

For more on America in the late 19th century do look out for the upcoming BBC Two travel series **Trailblazers** (transmission dates TBC). In this new show, Ruby Wax, Melanie Brown and Emily Atack follow in the illustrious footsteps of Isabella Bird (1831–1904), an intrepid British explorer who roamed the far east, India and the Middle East, but whose most famous book, *A Lady's Life in the Rocky Mountains*, describes her experiences in Colorado.

The English

BBC Two / Thursday 10 November

Weekly TV & radio

Visit *historyextra.com* for updates on upcoming TV and radio programmes

HISTORY ON THE BOX

"These men changed the course of the war through sheer determination and creativity"

Peaky Blinders creator **STEVEN KNIGHT** (left) tells us about his new drama centred on the founding of the SAS in the Second World War

Your new series, *SAS Rogue Heroes*, explores the formation of the Special Air Service. How did the show come about?
I was given Ben MacIntyre's book *SAS: Rogue Heroes* – an amazing story, but one I didn't know particularly well. One of the reasons I wanted to make the series was that my dad fought in the Eighth Army in north Africa during the Second World War. When I was a kid, he didn't tell me anything. He used to say: "We just were in the sun playing cowboys," and I always wondered what really went on. The SAS creation story is set in that time, which really drew me to it.

How did you research the series?
One of the most important parts of the research was meeting [desert navigator] Mike Sadler, the only surviving member of the original SAS. From speaking to him, I got the personality of those people, because he was so understated. His memories are still quite vivid. He would say things like: "We approached the Italian and German lines, and they opened fire with machine guns, mortars and hand grenades – it wasn't ideal."
This turn of phrase captured what they were like: so matter-of-fact.

What should we make of SAS founder David Stirling (1915–90)? He's become a slightly problematic figure. (In the 1970s, he created an organisation called Great Britain 75 that planned to step in and govern the country in the event of an "undemocratic event".)
I didn't want to go into who he became. We're all human; things happen and we change. I think history should look at what he had done before – and we should also be aware that Stirling, Jock Lewes, Paddy Mayne and the others changed the course of the war through sheer determination and creativity. Heroes can be flawed, but they did what they did.

Operating behind enemy lines, the early SAS pioneered a kind of commando-plus warfare. How radical was this?
They took the direct line between "this is where we are" and "this is what we want to achieve, so let's just go and do it". Stirling was in his mid-20s, and I think the sense of invulnerability you get when you're young helped. These were really young people having an idea and executing it in the most horrendous circumstances, when the stakes could not have been higher: is fascism going to take over the world or not? You have to bear in mind that, but for their madness and bravery, it could have gone the other way. H

SAS Rogue Heroes begins Sunday 30 October on BBC One and iPlayer

Connor Swindells (centre) plays David Stirling in a new BBC drama about the birth of the SAS

Nina Simone performing in 1965. Simon Schama explores her powerful song 'Mississippi Goddam' in his new series

"My own history and actual history have been interwoven – I was born during a V2 raid on London"

Historian **SIMON SCHAMA** (left) discusses his new series charting the historic milestones that occurred over the course of his own lifetime

What inspired your new series, *Simon Schama's History of Now*?
The series was always meant to be personal: a look back at the moments when my own life and world events touched each other. I was born during one of the last V2 raids on London in early 1945, and grew up with a strong sense of how history could take a brutal turn. Learning about the Holocaust only strengthened that instinct.

I seem to have been in places where history turned. I was in the US South in 1964 when the civil rights campaign was at its most perilous. During that long, hot summer, black activist James Chaney and Jewish students Andrew Goodman and Michael Schwermer were murdered by the Klan while registering black voters; I identified with those students. I was also in Prague in 1965 as the ice of communist dictatorship was beginning to crack, and in Paris in 1968 during the *événements de mai* [explored in Schama's 2020 series *The Romantics and Us*]. My own history and wider world history have been interwoven.

How does the series break down?
The episodes reflect my lifelong conviction that art and literature have an impact on history – that they are not just aesthetic acts. The three programmes are built around three of the great trends and battles since the end of the Second World War. This isn't a survey of history since '45; it is – for better or worse – my personal and selective history of "now".

The first programme, which is about democracy and truth, features George Orwell, [Czech writer, political dissident and former president] Václav Havel and [Chinese visual artist and activist] Ai Weiwei.

The second is about equality, and the fight – fought often in culture – to let communities find their voice, be they African-Americans, women or LGBTQ people.

I've also got personal connections, however fleeting, to some of the people I profile in this episode. I met [African-American writer and civil rights activist] James Baldwin and [prominent US conservative] William Buckley at the extraordinary Cambridge Union debate on the American dream in February 1965. Germaine Greer I knew at Cambridge.

The third programme is about the furious debate over whether the US – and, by extension, the world – would sustain the socio-demographic promise of the New Deal or go down the road of hard individualist capitalism. We focus on Ayn Rand [the writer and philosopher who developed objectivism], but we start with Aaron Copland's extraordinary musical piece *Fanfare for the Common Man*. The programme culminates in the elemental concerns that circumscribe debates about the fate of the Earth, at the centre of which was conservationist Rachel Carson. My father read her book *Under the Sea Wind* to me while sitting on the beaches of the Essex shore when I was small.

Some think of Ayn Rand as someone whose ideas represent a threat to liberty. What's your take on her?
Whatever you think of Ayn Rand – and I'm not a sympathiser – she needs to be taken seriously as an immensely influential force, shaping the Reaganite '80s and Trussonomics now. She was charismatic and mercurially eloquent, and her novels reached millions upon millions of readers.

The series explores themes of "democracy, equality and the dream of plenty", at a time when the postwar social contract in the west – the often unspoken idea that our children will be richer, happier and more fulfilled than us – is breaking down. What are your reflections on the power of these values?
Excellent question. I have not just children but four grandchildren, so this has been on my mind a great deal – the sense in which their future could be so precarious, hence the engagement with the fate of the Earth in the last programme. I don't see how anyone calling themselves a historian can't also be an environmental historian these days.

But it's not just the fate of the Earth that so resonates now. Issues we had naively thought were behind us – racial justice, the status of truth itself in politics – are still mercilessly apparent today in the time of Donald Trump and Vladimir Putin. The fight for those causes goes on, and it will be fought as much through culture as through standard politics.

Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* is a good example of this. Our interviews with Atwood, Ai Weiwei and Nadya

GETTY IMAGES

HISTORY COOKBOOK

In the 18th century, some suitors hid rings inside these sweet buns to propose to their partners

TASTE

Maritozzi

These sweet Italian buns have a long history dating back to ancient Rome. During the Middle Ages a maritozzo was the only dessert people could eat during Lent. Today, Italians across the country celebrate the dish in early December, known as "Maritozzo Day".

Difficulty: 5/10
Time: 12 hours (including fridge time overnight)

INGREDIENTS

For the dough
250g strong white bread flour
15g caster sugar
1 tsp fast-action dried yeast
125ml whole milk
1 egg, and 1 beaten to glaze
50g diced salted butter
1/4 tsp fine sea salt

For the filling
600ml double cream
1 tsp vanilla bean paste

METHOD

1. To make the dough, combine the flour, sugar, yeast and salt in a bowl and whisk.
2. Add the milk and one egg. Mix again until a shaggy dough forms. Knead in a mixer for a further 10 minutes till the dough becomes smooth and elastic.
3. While the mixer is still kneading, add the butter. Mix for another 10 minutes till the butter is fully absorbed and the dough is elastic once more.
4. Form the dough into a ball and put in a bowl. Cover with cling film and place in the fridge overnight to chill.
5. Divide the chilled dough into 10 pieces, and shape each one into a ball.
6. Put the balls on a tray lined with baking paper. Cover them with a tea towel and leave to rest for 15 minutes.
7. Roll each ball into a stubby oval, similar to a small rugby ball. Return to the tray and cover again, leaving for 1 hour or until they've doubled in size.
8. Heat the oven to 180°C (fan 160°C). Brush the buns with the beaten egg, and bake for 15–17 minutes or until golden brown. Leave to cool.
9. For the filling, whip the cream with the vanilla paste until it holds soft peaks.
10. Slice the buns lengthways without cutting all the way through, so the halves remain attached. Fill with whipped vanilla cream.

Recipe adapted from: olivemagazine.com

Tolokonnikova of [Russian protest art group] Pussy Riot were so rich, moving and illuminating that BBC Four will run a half-hour programme on each of them.

Can you pick out a couple of examples of stories you explore in the series?
One stirring sequence explores how Nina Simone came to compose 'Mississippi Goddam' in response to the 1963 church bombing in Birmingham, Alabama that killed four children, and the effect that the song and the event had on the civil rights campaign.

Charlie Chaplin features, too, as the target of red scare polemicists – above all the gossip columnist-turned-"pinko hunter" Hedda Hopper. Enormous hatred came his way for "sympathising with the common man". The "red hunters" succeeded in ensuring that he was not allowed to return to the US.

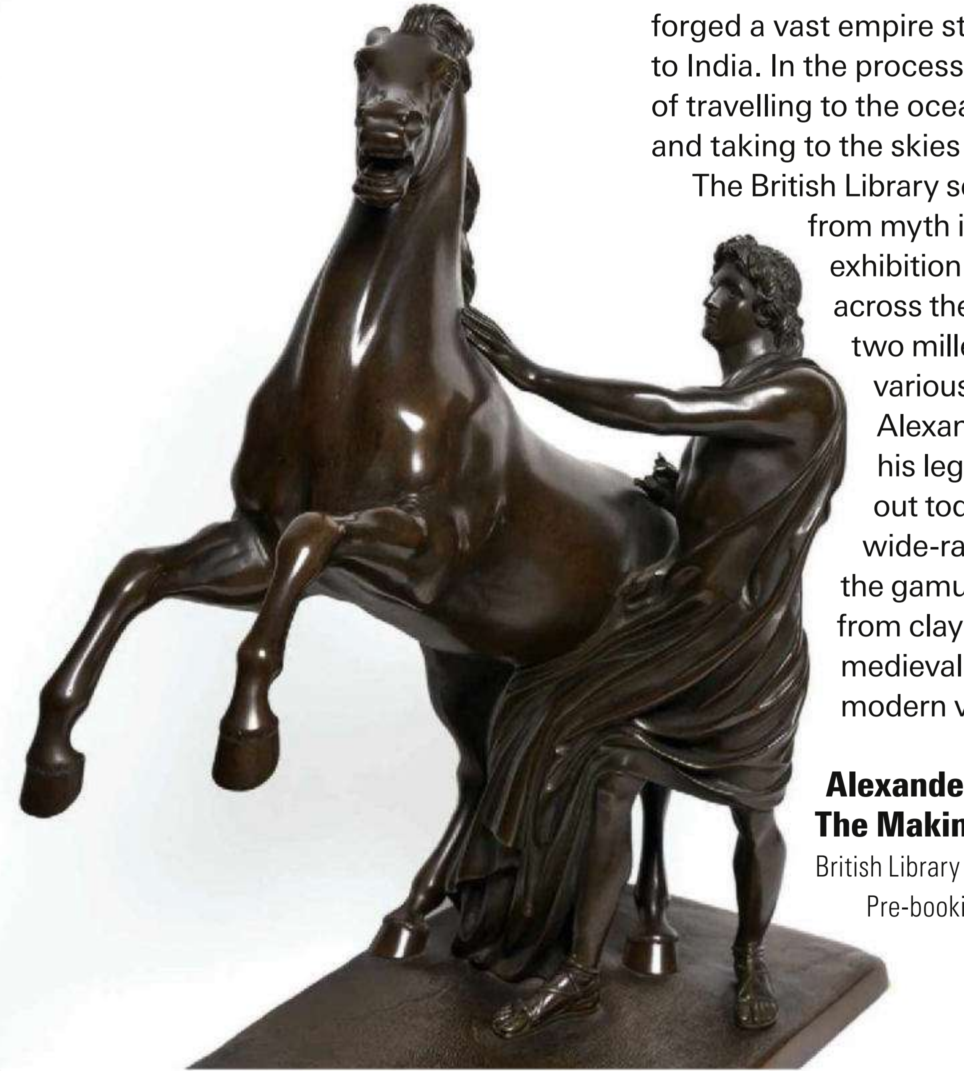
Is the series to some extent a history of how we have thought about and imagined the future?
Yes. It ties the past to prospects for the future – and, indeed, our present.

Simon Schama's History of Now is due to air on BBC Two in November and will be on BBC iPlayer

BY KIND PERMISSION OF THE DUKE OF BUCCLEUCH & QUEENSBERRY/SAMANTHA NOTT

VISIT

Legend and legacy



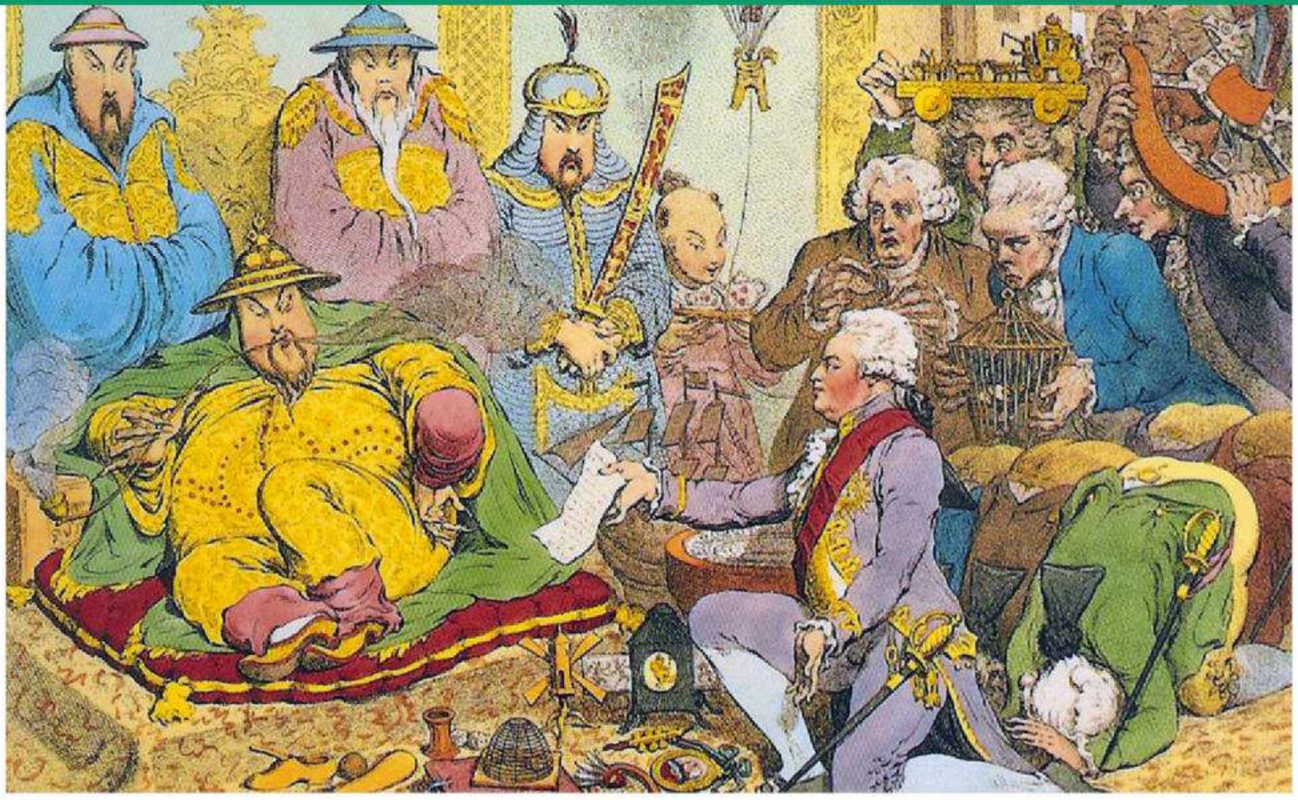
A statue of Alexander with his horse. The British Library is exploring the warrior's story

Alexander the Great's life seems to belong not merely in the history books but on the biggest of screens. During the fourth century BC, this celebrated warrior of Macedon forged a vast empire stretching from Greece to India. In the process he spawned legends of travelling to the ocean floor in a glass bell and taking to the skies in a chariot.

The British Library sets out to unpick man from myth in an ambitious new exhibition. Visiting cultures across the globe from the past two millennia, it considers how various societies reshaped Alexander's story – and how his legacy continues to play out today. Exhibits in wide-ranging displays roam the gamut of eras and genres, from clay astrology tablets to medieval manuscripts and modern video games.

Alexander the Great: The Making of a Myth
British Library / Until 19 Feb 2023 / Pre-booking advised / *bl.uk*

Every issue we highlight a recent edition of our podcast. You can find it along with more than 1,400 previous episodes at our website: **historyextra.com/podcast**



George Macartney, British ambassador to China, meets the Qianlong emperor in 1793, as shown in a Gillray cartoon

Stuck in the middle

Our podcast editor **ELLIE CAWTHORNE** discusses the dangerous task of translating between the British empire and Qing China at a fragile moment in international relations

Under any circumstances, being an interpreter is no easy task. But for those translating at the first formal diplomatic contact between China and the west, the stakes were higher than usual.

Henrietta Harrison joined me on the podcast this month to speak about her book, *The Perils of Interpreting*, which looks at the translators working on Sino-British negotiations in the late 18th and early 19th centuries.

As Harrison explains, the titular "perils of interpreting" at this precarious moment of cross-cultural communication were many. "Chinese is a very different language to English, so it can sound totally alien if you translate it too directly," she says. "The art of translation is not so much about getting things right, as making choices." Take, for example, the Chinese word "*yi*" – which could be translated either as "foreigner" or "barbarian". The nuance of this single word could have a profound impact on whether the two nations became allies, or enemies. Add to this the fact that one of the only bilingual people in the room was a 12-year-old boy, and you've got a fragile situation on your hands.

Another flashpoint in this dance of diplomatic etiquette was the *kowtow*. Would British ambassadors bow to the emperor, touching their heads to the floor? Or should they save face by refusing the ritual, and risk offending their Chinese hosts? Or, as sources Harrison uncovered suggest, might they have engaged in some sneaky realpolitik by doing the *kowtow* then later pretending they hadn't?

Acting as the go-between in these delicate scenarios put interpreters in a dangerous position. "Translators are often seen as traitors, because to know a language well enough to interpret, you have to be deeply immersed in a culture and have foreign friends," says Harrison. "One of the reasons the Chinese court was so fantastically ill-informed about the British was because of a fear of people who moved between cultures."

It's been argued that China was entirely isolated in this period, its refusal to engage with the west culminating in the Opium Wars. But, says Harrison, looking at the experiences of interpreters reveals "there was much more contact than you might imagine, a whole world of interconnections that has been downplayed".

Listen now

You can hear this episode at *historyextra.com/interpreters-pod*

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Nixon's negotiations

Moving forward more than a century, another key diplomatic moment between China and the west was Nixon's 1972 visit – hailed (by the US president himself) as marking the end of an era and a thawing of the Cold War. **Rana Mitter** joined us to discuss Nixon's PR-pleasing antics on the Great Wall, his brief face-to-face with Chinese leader Mao Zedong, and the careful diplomatic manoeuvres that went on behind the scenes.

historyextra.com/nixon-china

Chinese characters

An ordinary soldier writing home to his mother in 223 BC. A Tang dynasty poet who offered insights on grief, love and family. And a 20th-century feminist who sought to "abolish the rule of men" to reform her nation. All of these fascinating characters feature in our podcast with **Michael Wood,** who shared the stories of five lives that offer a window onto the changing face of China down the centuries.

historyextra.com/voices-china

Chaos and communism

In 1949, the course of China's future was dramatically altered by Mao Zedong's communist revolution. Speaking to us in 2021, **Graham Hutchings** charted the tumultuous year that saw the end of the Chinese civil war and the birth of the People's Republic of China, revealing how it convulsed the lives of ordinary people and considering its complex legacy.

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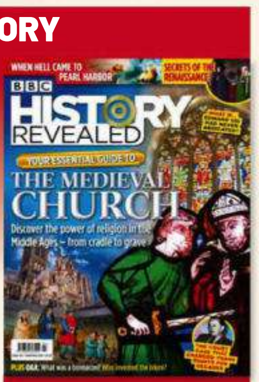
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Ruins and royalty

Surrounded by verdant Suffolk countryside, Bury St Edmunds rose to prominence as a pilgrim hotspot in the Anglo-Saxon era before its fortunes dipped during the Dissolution. **RHIANNON DAVIES** pays a visit

The resting place of Mary Tudor, in St Mary's Church. Her tomb was lowered in the 18th century after parishioners complained that it obstructed access to the communion table

What connects "Bad" King John, Charles Dickens' first novel and a wolf skulking under a hedgerow? All of them are woven into the history of the Suffolk town of Bury St Edmunds. Its sloping streets reflect its storied past: grand Georgian houses jostle against whitewashed, wood-beamed buildings, while at the bottom of the hill stands a ruined Norman abbey surrounded by glorious gardens.

The town first gained importance during the Middle Ages as the resting place of Saint Edmund. Following a Viking raid, this ninth-century East Anglian king was reputedly shot with arrows then beheaded after he refused to renounce his Christianity. According to legend, his followers found his head under a hedgerow, guarded by a wolf; after they retrieved the head and brought it back to his bloodied body, it was miraculously reattached – the first of many wonders attributed to Edmund's corpse.

The saint's remains were transported to the readily defensible town of Bury (then called Beodericsworth), where monks were tasked with guarding the body and welcoming pilgrims. In 1020, a new Benedictine abbey was established. Over subsequent centuries the saint's modest shrine was enlarged into an imposing Norman abbey church, clad in ashlar limestone and boasting a 100-metre-tall spire. At its heart was an opulent presbytery holding the body of Saint Edmund, decorated with green and purple marble and gilded with jewels.

Only echoes of this architectural marvel survive today. The abbey was surrendered to Henry VIII during the dissolution of the monasteries and sold off to a new owner, who promptly prised off most of the expensive limestone from the abbey walls, leaving behind only the flint rubble cores. Visitors today can wander between the cores; one set of rocky outcrops just beyond the Great Court is a particular favourite with brides for photoshoots. (They might be less enthusiastic if they learned that these pillars are the remains of the monks' toilets.)

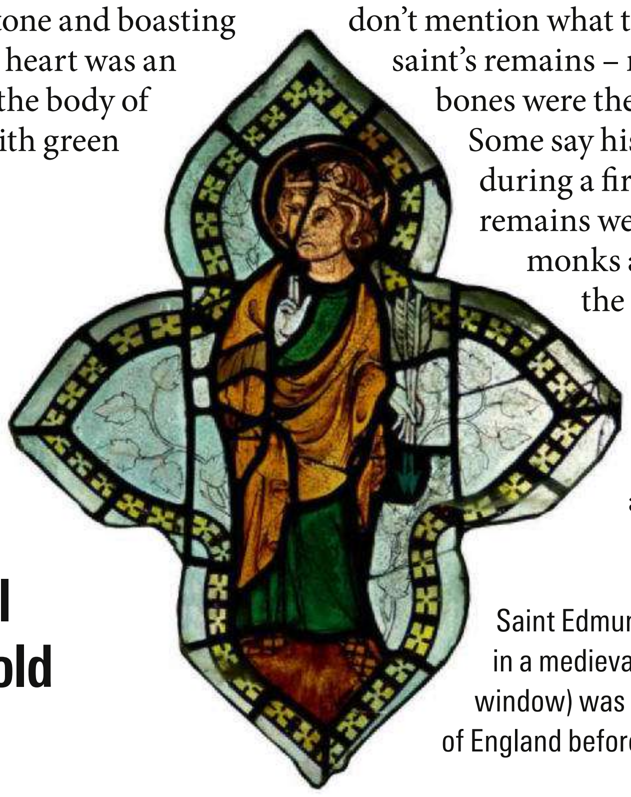
Eagle-eyed visitors can also spot a reference to Magna Carta on the stones: a Victorian plaque on one of the pillars commemorating the town's links to the historic document. In 1214, a group of barons was invited by Abbot Hugh of Northwold to Bury St Edmunds. Here they gathered in the presbytery to affix their names to a "charter of liberties", and swore that they would pressure John to recognise the freedoms demanded.

Centuries-old puzzle

Even today, a fascinating mystery surrounds the site: what happened to Edmund's body? Though Henry's commissioners wrote much about the jewels and gold they found, they don't mention what they did with the saint's remains – nor even if his bones were there at the time. Some say his coffin burned during a fire; others that his remains were spirited away by monks and hidden during the Dissolution.

Historian Francis Young told me his theory: "I came across an early 18th-century document in which the writer describes meeting an elderly man who said his great-grandfather had been a monk at Bury. He claimed that his great-grandfather knew where Edmund's body was, being one of the people who had hidden it. He gives one detail – that the body was placed in an iron chest and hidden – but doesn't say where."

> " One part of the ruined abbey is a particular favourite for bridal photoshoots: the old monks' toilets "



Saint Edmund (shown here in a medieval stained-glass window) was the patron saint of England before Saint George

Francis believes that the answer might be found in a specific area of the ruins. "If you've got a huge iron chest, you can't carry it very far," he observed. "So you'd take it somewhere nearby – I think to the monastic cemetery, at the east end, which has never been excavated."

Although the location of Edmund's body is in doubt, one royal is certainly still buried in the town: Mary Tudor, Henry VIII's sister and the wife of the French king Louis XII. Her remains are interred inside St Mary's Church, a short walk from the abbey.

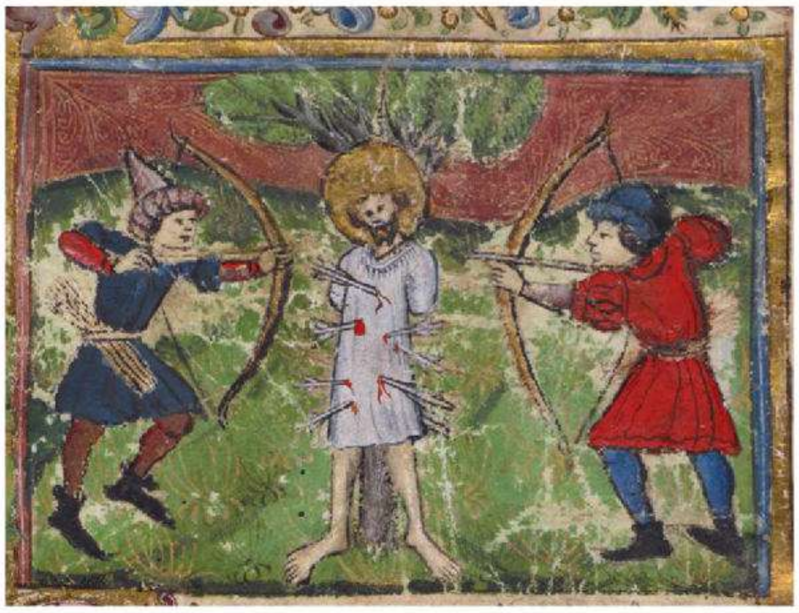
Literary royalty visited the town, too. Charles Dickens stayed at the ivy-clad Angel Hotel, a Georgian inn opposite the abbey gardens. He was so inspired by the building that he included it in *The Pickwick Papers*.

This year, the town marks a milestone anniversary: 1,000 years since the abbey was founded (delayed by two years because of Covid-19). A packed schedule of commemorative events culminates with celebrations for St Edmund's Day, 20 November – by tradition, the date of the saint's death. H

Rhiannon Davies is section editor at *BBC History Magazine*

For more information, go to **visit-burystedmunds.co.uk**

The rubble cores of the ruined Norman abbey frame the modern cathedral, which was originally the poor parishioners' church



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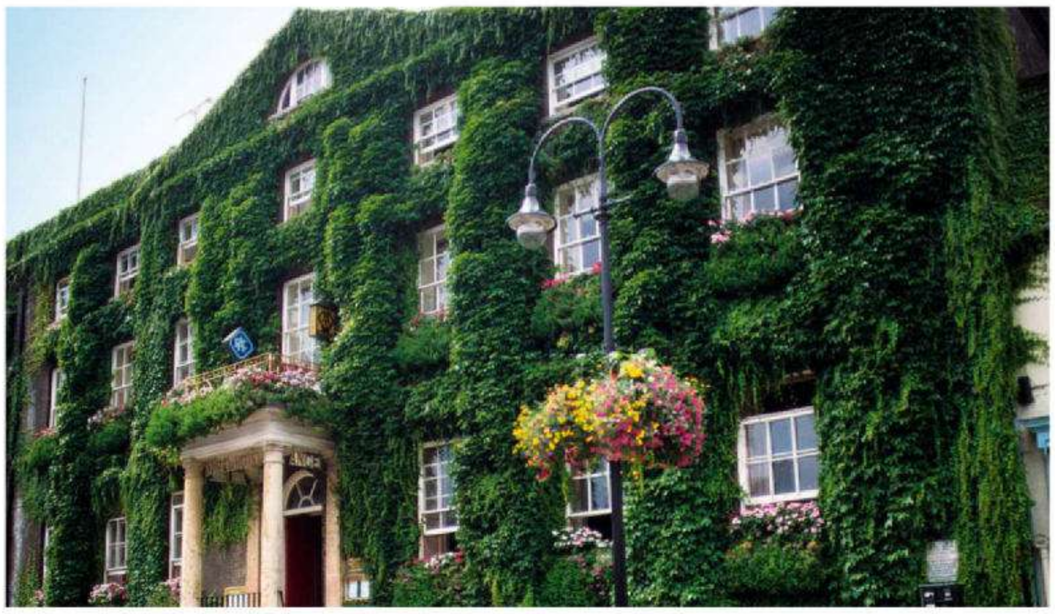
Saint Edmund is shot with arrows in this 15th-century illustration. The East Anglian king's body was enshrined in Bury St Edmunds



The ivy-clad exterior of the Angel Hotel, built on the site of three medieval inns. Visitors can still admire stone vaulting in the undercroft

PRIZE CROSSWORD

Across

1 Castle in Wales taken by Owain Glyndŵr in 1404 but recaptured by the English a few years later (7)

5 ____ Hill, pioneering social reformer and one of the three founders of the National Trust (7)

9 16th-century religious reformer, founder of Presbyterianism in Scotland (4)

10 The battle of ____ (aka battle of the Three Emperors), fought on 2 December 1805; it was a great victory for Napoleon (10)

12 George Orwell's celebrated political fable, published in 1945 (6,4)

13 The Channel Island which, between 1927 and 1974, was ruled by Dame Sibyl Hathaway (4)

14 "____" Townshend, nickname of the 18th-century politician who supported the use of a certain vegetable in crop rotation (6)

15 Speaker such as Demosthenes, Cicero, Winston Churchill or Martin Luther King Jr (6)

18 Rodrigo (Pope Alexander VI) and Cesare were two notable members of this powerful Italian family of Spanish origin (6)

20 The Roman poet best known for his unfinished epic, the *Aeneid* (6)

23 The middle of an ancient Roman month, such as the famous day of the assassination of one of that civilisation's greatest leaders (4)

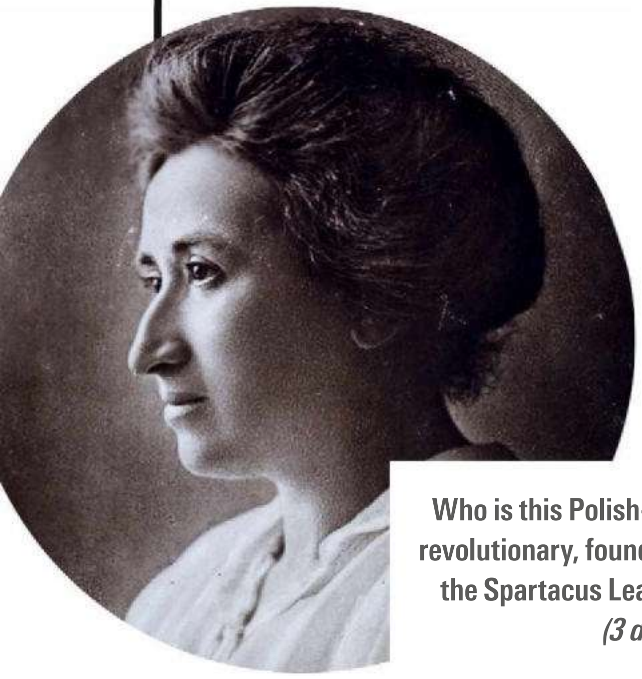
25 In Greek mythology, the son of Penelope and Odysseus (10)

26 Her marriage to a soldier considered to be beneath her station led to her banishment from the Tudor court by her (more famous) sister, Anne (4,6)

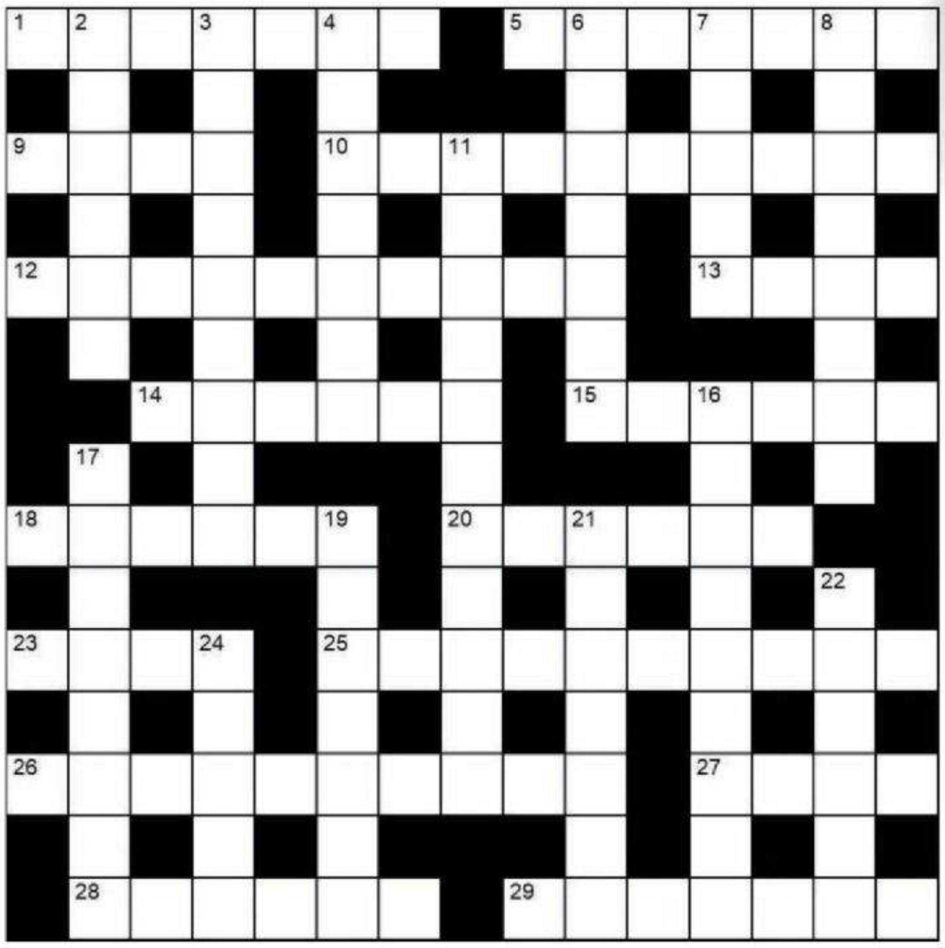
27 Sumerian name of a great Mesopotamian city, one of the world's first (4)

28 An important temple and oracle site, thought by the ancient Greeks to be the centre of the world (6)

29 Ancient region spanning parts of modern Afghanistan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, probably subdued in the sixth century BC by Persian king Cyrus the Great (7)



Who is this Polish-born revolutionary, founder of the Spartacus League? *(3 down)*



Down

2 Mary ____, highly regarded fossil hunter of the 19th century, who was born and died in Lyme Regis, Dorset (6)

3 Rosa ____, Polish-born revolutionary and a founder of the Spartacus League, later the German Communist Party (9)

4 A legend of screen comedy, born in London in 1889 (7)

6 Nazi extermination camp that was located in western Poland (7)

7 French city, home to Vincent van Gogh during one of his most productive periods (1888/89) (5)

8 Crime-fighting agency formed in 1923, originally headquartered in Vienna (8)

11 The shooting of about 250 black demonstrators here in 1960 proved to be a turning point in South Africa's history (11)

16 One of the best-known battles of the Hundred Years' War, famous for its widespread use of the longbow (9)

17 Bob ____, journalist whose investigation of the Watergate scandal with a fellow *Washington Post* reporter won the newspaper a Pulitzer Prize in 1973 (8)

19 Seleucus I Nicator founded this city, which has been called the "cradle of Christianity" (7)

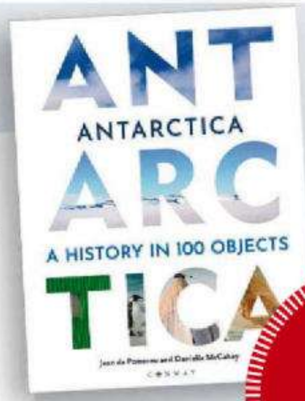
21 The secret police of this former eastern bloc country was the "Securitate", disbanded following the fall of its dictator in 1989 (7)

22 Term for burial mounds or barrows (6)

24 A cotton mill established at this Cheshire village in 1784 is now a National Trust property, Quarry Bank (5)

……

Compiled by **Eddie James**



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Down 1 Elba 2 Castro 3 Gary Powers 4 Peelers 6 Ireton 8 Cossack 9 Lise Meitner 13 Dionysius 16 Normandy 17 Barnard 18 Clipper 21 Erhard 24 Tang

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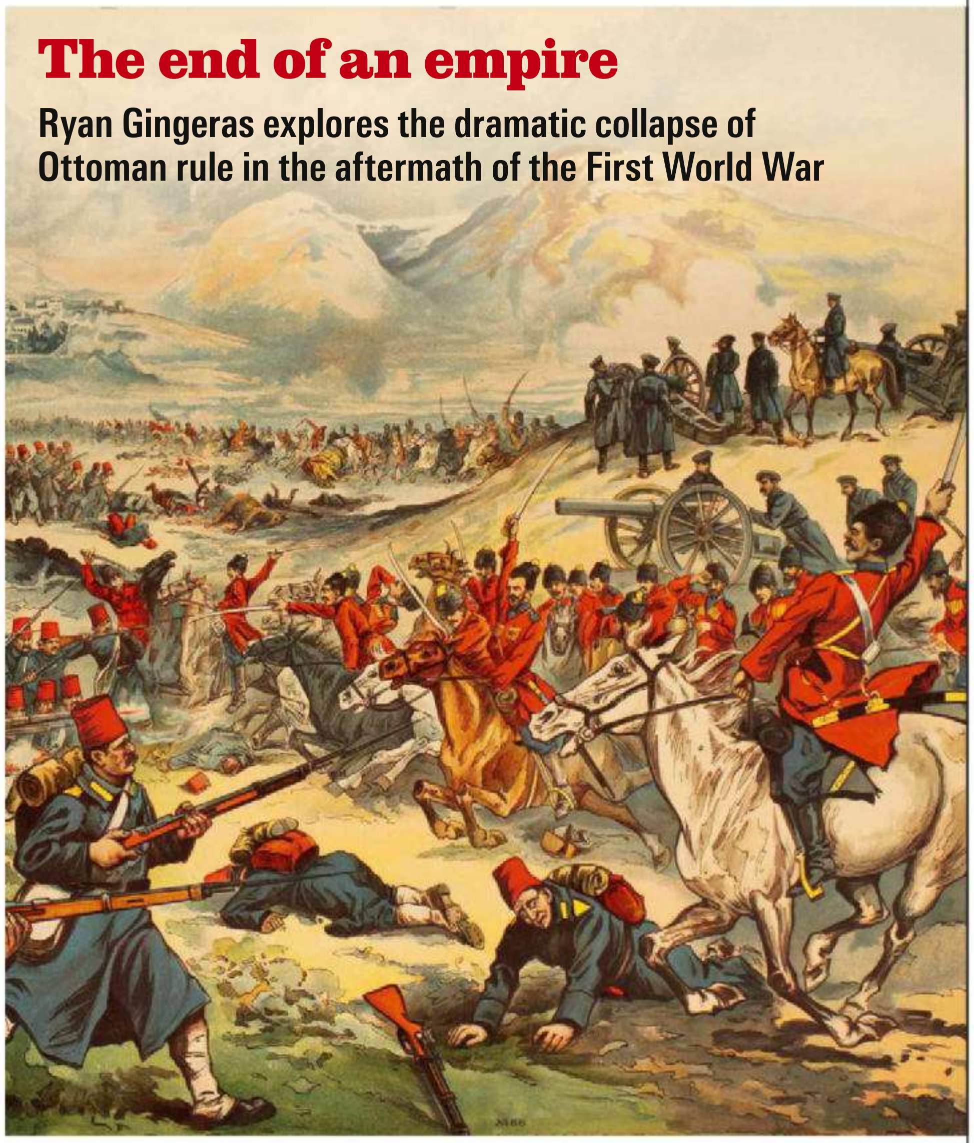

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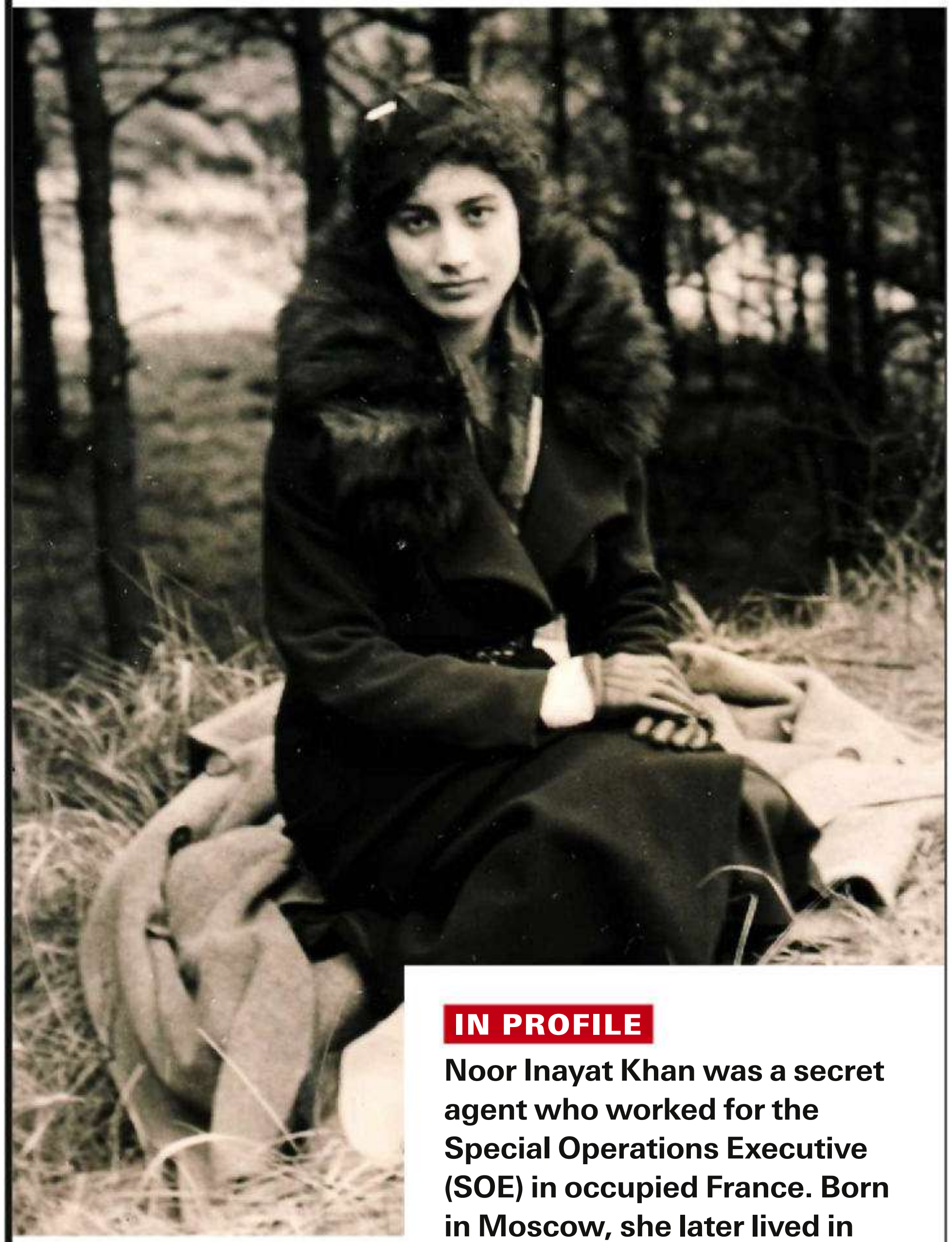
MY HISTORY HERO

Actor and TV presenter ***Sam Naz*** *chooses*

Noor Inayat Khan

1914–44

Sam Naz is an actor, TV presenter and news anchor for Sky News. She recently wrote, produced and starred in the film *Liberté* about Noor Inayat Khan, available at *libertefilm.com*



Noor Inayat Khan, who worked as a British spy during the Second World War, endured horrific conditions after being captured by the Nazis. "It's this resilience and mental strength that I really wanted to explore in my film *Liberté*," explains Sam Naz

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IN PROFILE

Noor Inayat Khan was a secret agent who worked for the Special Operations Executive (SOE) in occupied France. Born in Moscow, she later lived in London and Paris. After the Nazi invasion, Khan escaped to Britain and joined the SOE in 1942. A year later she was sent to France to join the Resistance, but in October 1943 she was betrayed to the Gestapo. Imprisoned until September 1944, she was then taken to Dachau concentration camp and executed. She was posthumously awarded the George Cross.

> " She committed herself to one of the most dangerous jobs in the war – that of a wireless operator, where the life expectancy was just six weeks "

When did you first hear about Noor Inayat Khan? My obsession with Noor began more than a decade ago. I spotted an article in a newspaper about some of the women of the Second World War, within which was this formidable, forgotten heroine – a Muslim woman who was a British spy! I couldn't believe that here was someone who looked like me, yet about whom I had been taught nothing. Khan's life, her remarkable contribution to the war effort and, ultimately, her sacrifice were not common knowledge. For me, that was the start of years of revisiting her story.

What kind of person was she? Khan was a complex, international person. She was a descendant of Indian nobility with an American mother. Growing up in a spiritual Sufi Muslim household in England and France, she was around music from an early age, and adored playing the harp and piano. Creative to the core, she also wrote poems and children's stories. She must have been fiercely independent to have pursued all this as a single woman back then.

What made Khan a hero? Ultimately, she defied the odds to become the unlikeliest of spies. She pushed past being underestimated by those training her, and committed herself to one of the most dangerous jobs in the war – that of a wireless operator, where the life expectancy was just six weeks. To put her life on the line despite the prejudice she must have faced as a woman of colour is awe-inspiring.

What was her finest hour? Firstly, her decision to remain in Paris after the rest of her network had fallen to the Gestapo. To continue to work alone, providing that vital communication link to London despite knowing that the enemy was closing in, showed remarkable bravery. Secondly, her loyalty after being captured. She maintained her silence in the face of horrific brutality and interrogations over 10 months. It's this resilience and mental strength that I really wanted to explore in my film *Liberté*

Is there anything you don't particularly admire about her? I think she was perhaps a little naïve. Some reports say that she had written down information that ended up with the Nazis.

You played Khan in your film *Liberté*. How did you prepare for the role? I've covered Khan's story as a journalist, but this was vastly different, emotionally and physically. Portraying her authentically meant embodying the character completely, which is where I hope my extensive research delving into the archives helped.

What would you ask Khan if you could meet her? I'd ask how she kept her silence during such desperate times in solitary confinement. What kept her going, and how did she stay so loyal?

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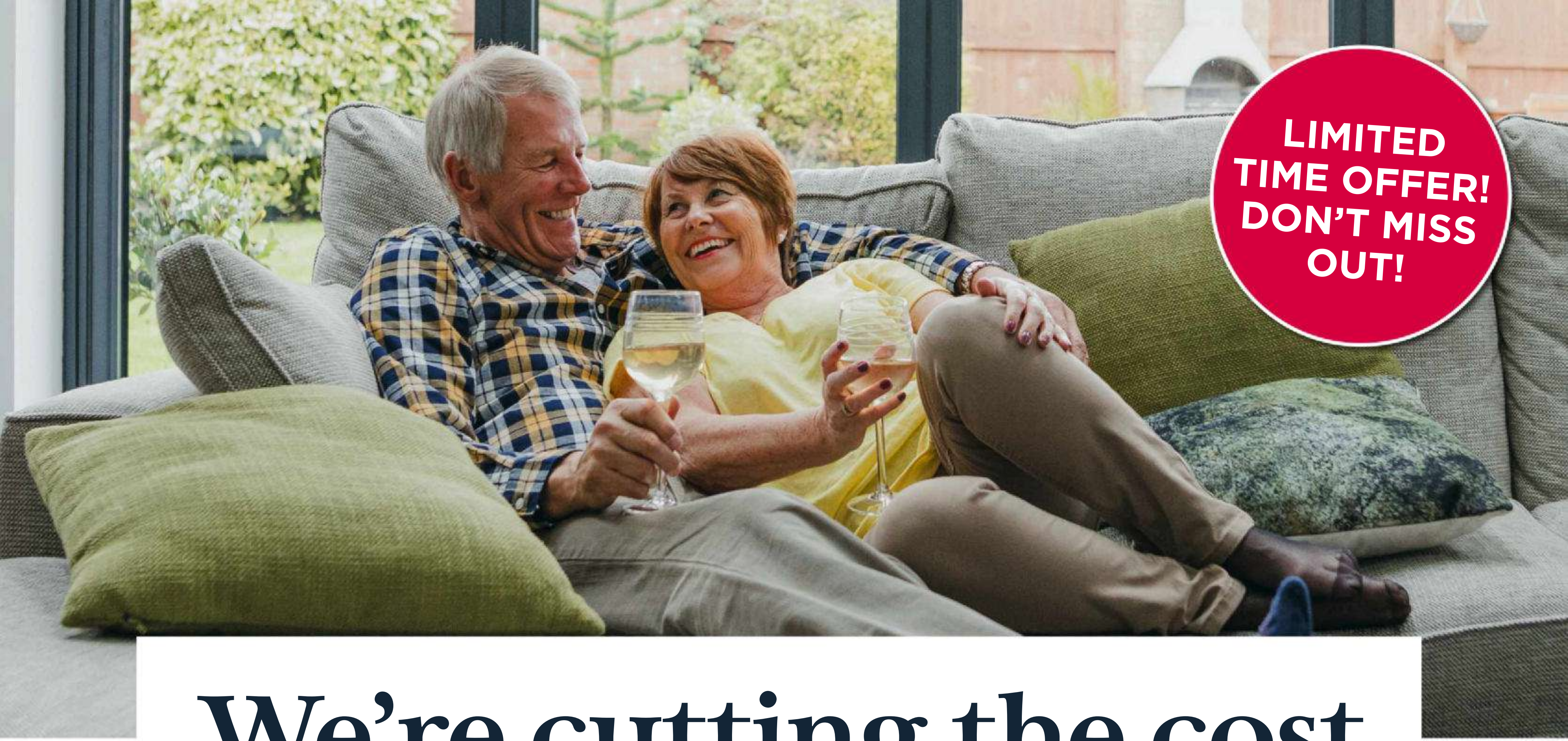

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